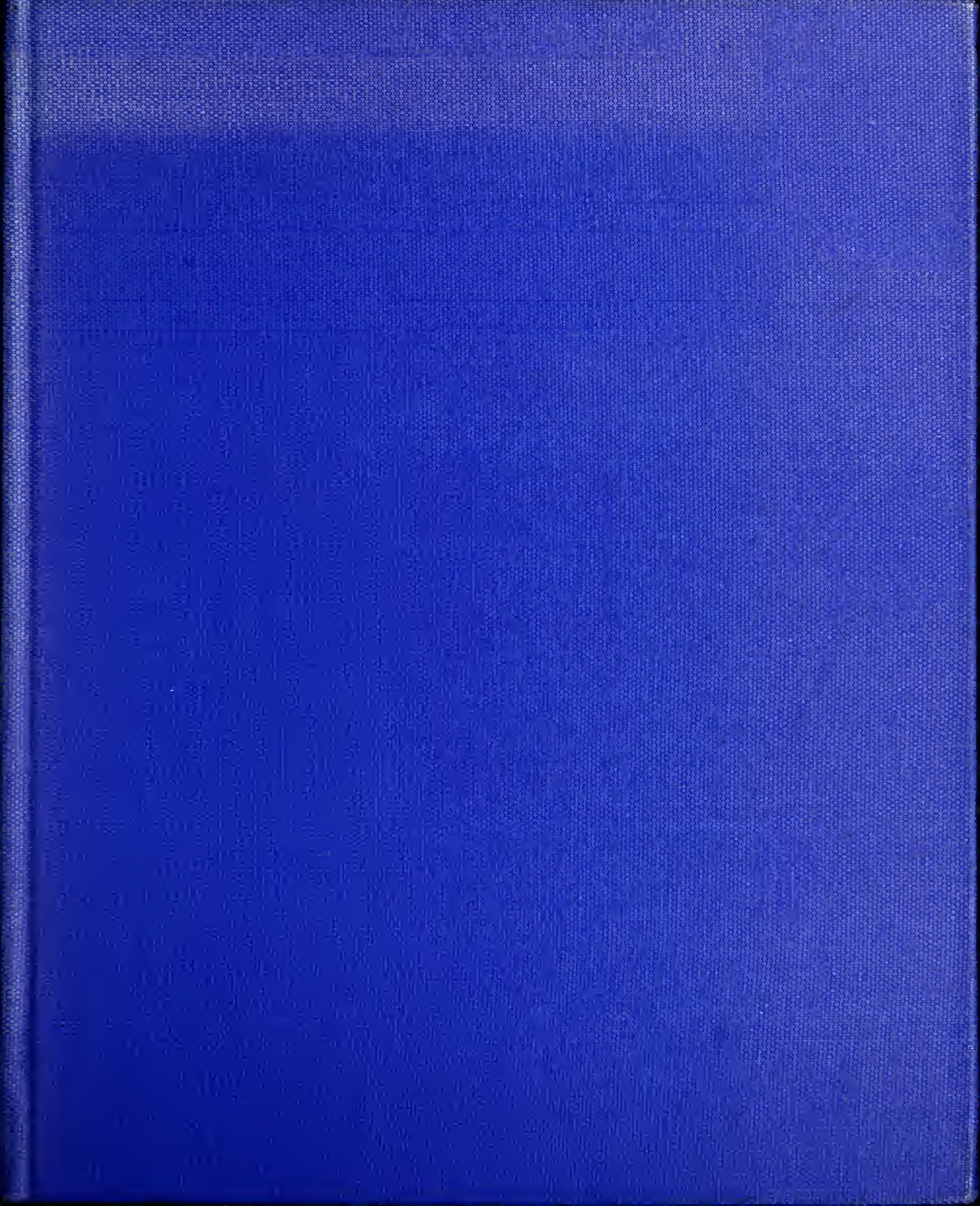



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PUBLISHED BY

J. W. LEWIS & CO., OF PHILADELPHIA,

WITH

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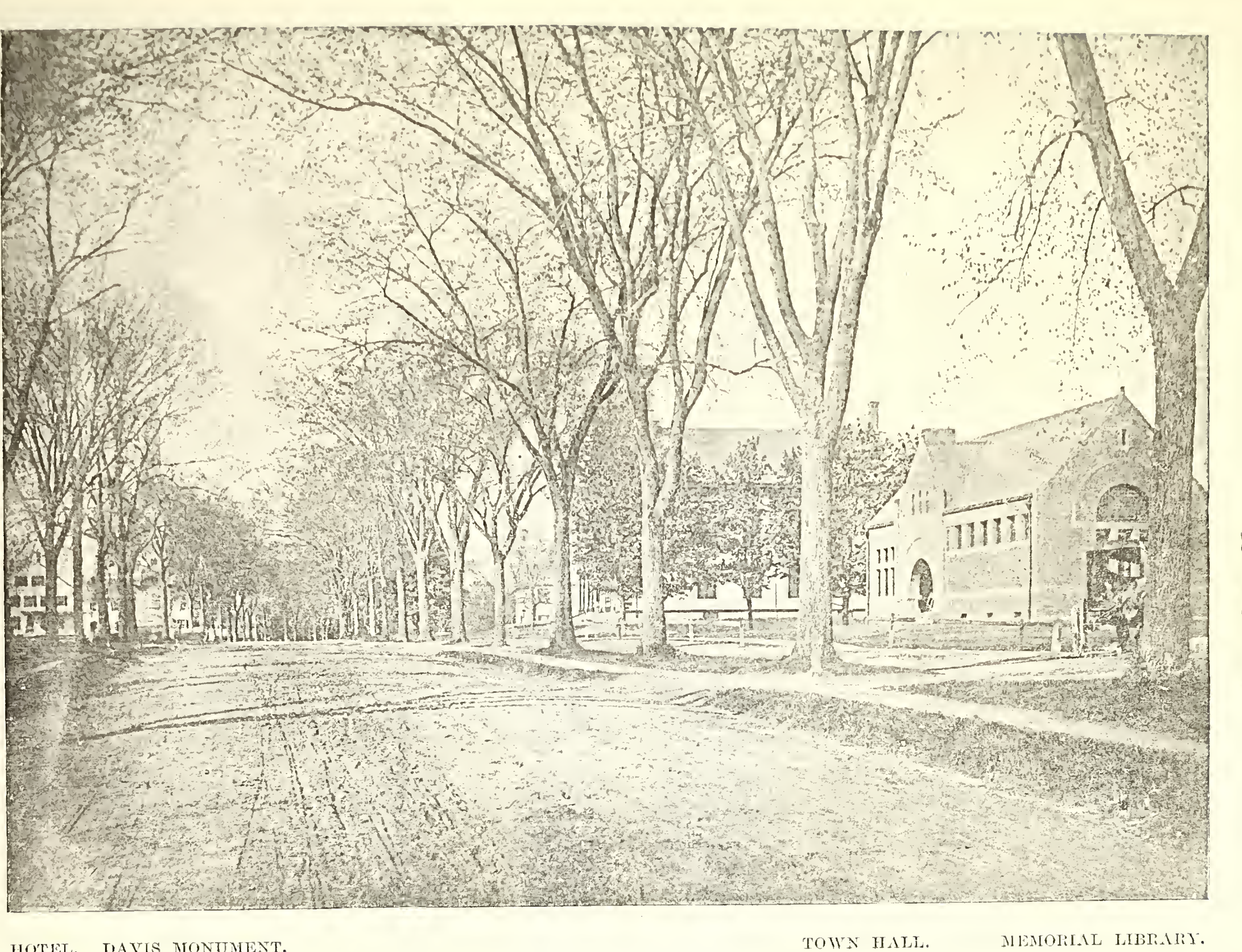
BY



REV. JAMES FLETCHER.



PHILADELPHIA AND BOSTON:
J. W. LEWIS & CO.,
1890.



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[233]-301,7p.

SHELF CARD

Mounted on fly leaf: Historical map of Acton... compiled and drawn by Horace F.Tuttle, 56x43cm.
"Reprinted from the 'History of Middlesex county, Massachusetts'."

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THANKS are hereby expressed to the publishers, J. W. Lewis & Co., of Philadelphia, for their generosity and courtesy in providing the printed extras for the Acton *Local*, at such reduced rates.

To the owners of the expensive choice steel plates,— for the free use of the same.

To Rev. F. P. Wood, for his accommodation in the matter of engraving blocks. To the Pratt Brothers, for their indulgence in the same line.

To George C. Wright, for furnishing the new photo-electrotype block of the oil painting of Capt. Isaac Davis' wife, which has never before been printed for the public eye. The oil painting was a remarkable likeness of the venerable lady, taken by the best artist when she was in her 92d year. It was photographed by Mr. Wright, several years ago in New York, where he found it with some of the descendants. He has had this photograph photo-electrotyped for the uses of the Acton *Local*. It is a rare, historic gem.

Thanks are also due to Mrs. Winthrop E. Faulkner for the photo-electrotype engraving of the crayon sketch of her husband, a fine *fac-simile* of the original.

To Arthur H. Cowdry, M. D., of Stoneham, for the block of his father, so highly prized by all.

To Hon. William A. Wilde, who again has shown his appreciation of his birthtown by the gift of the frontispiece picture of this book, and also of the photo-electrotype of his own person.

To Horace F. Tuttle, for his gratuitous services, of the last winter months, in drawing and compiling the original for the lithographic map of Acton.

To the public in general, for their response, in interest and subscriptions, to the work, which is now submitted to them in trust.

JAMES FLETCHER.

ACTON, MASS., Dec. 12, 1890.

ACTON IN HISTORY.

COMPILED BY REV. JAMES FLETCHER.

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PHILADELPHIA AND BOSTON:
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AN

HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF THE

TOWN OF ACTON.

BY

REV. JAMES FLETCHER.

REPRINTED FROM THE "HISTORY OF MIDDLESEX COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS."

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF THE

TOWN OF ACTON.

The hope of rescuing from the wreck of oblivion some of the precious relics of the past has been the solace of care in the preparation of this work.

Hearty thanks are here expressed and acknowledgments made to those who have contributed with the pen and the memory in aid of the sketch.

William D. Tuttle, Esq., the town clerk, and his son, Horace F., have rendered important assistance in gathering facts from the town records.

The historical map prepared by Horace F. Tuttle for the history, and which it was hoped could be published in the same, is a valuable acquisition for future reference. Its important items are given. It should be printed and doubtless will be soon. Rev. Dr. Knowlton, Rev. F. P. Wood, Rev. Mr. Heath, A. A. Wyman, Esq., Horace Hosmer and his daughter Bertha, Deacon Samuel Hosmer, Mrs. John Hapgood, Mrs. Lottie Flagg, Luther Conant, Esq., Moses Taylor, Esq., and Luke Smith have rendered essential service in gathering up the fragments that nothing be lost.

The Centennial address of Josiah H. Adams, Esq., Shattuck's "History of Concord" and the "Colonial History" of Charles H. C. Walcott have been freely consulted in the compilation.

The history of Acton seems to the writer in the review like a romance dropped freshly from the skies. It is in reality a plain tale of persons and events which have consecrated for all time this locality.

JAMES FLETCHER.

COLONIAL PERIOD.—Acton, twenty-four miles northwest of Boston, has on the north Littleton and Westford; on the east Carlisle and Concord; on the south Sudbury, Maynard and Stow; and on the west Boxboro' and Littleton.

Acton at its incorporation, July 21, 1735, was bounded by Sudbury, Concord, Billerica, Chelmsford, Westford, Littleton and Stow, which then included Boxborough. The principal part of what is now Carlisle, then belonging to Old Concord, was set off as a part of the new town, Acton.

The Carlisle District of Acton was incorporated as a separate town in 1780; the easterly part of Old Concord was incorporated in the new town of Bedford in 1729; and the southerly part of Old Concord was incorporated in the new town of Lincoln in 1754, so that from 1754 to 1780 the township of Acton was larger than that of Concord, though much behind in wealth and population. At the time of Concord's incorporation, in 1635, what is now the Acton territory was not a part of Concord, but was granted to Concord a few years after by the name of the "Concord Village," or the new grant covering nearly the present boundaries of Acton. The Willard Farms included in the act incorporating Acton in 1735 had, previous to that act, been granted to Concord.

When Acton was made a town the statute bounded it on the east by "Concord old Bounds," from which it appears, as before stated, that it includes no part of the original Concord and that the dividing line between the two towns is a portion of the old Concord on that side.

The Acton boundary extended leads to a heap of lichen-covered boulders, surmounted by a stake.

This ancient monument is near the top of a hill in the southwesterly part of Carlisle, and undoubtedly marks the old northwest corner of Concord.

It was identified and pointed out to Chas. H. Walcott, of Concord, on the ground by Major B. F. Heald, of Carlisle, who says that he has often heard his father and other ancient men, long since deceased, speak of this bound as marking the old Concord corner.

Everything goes to corroborate this testimony. The place was commonly known by the name of "Berry Corner," and was the original northeast corner of Acton, but in 1780 (statute passed April 28, 1780) a portion of that town near this point was included in what was then constituted the District of Carlisle, and subsequently formed a part of the town of the same name (Carlisle did not acquire all the legal characteristics of a town until February 18, 1805—3 Special Laws, 497).

Thomas Wheeler and others who came to Concord about 1639, found the most convenient of the lands already given out, and in 1642 petitioned for a grant of land on the northwest, which was conceded on condition that they improved the grant within two years. Most of the lands were granted to Concord for feeding.

They were not very accurately defined, being found upon actual survey to contain a greater number of acres than nominally specified in the grants.

A settlement was begun on these grants as early as 1656 and possibly a few years earlier. The Shepherd and Law families were among the first settlers.

Many of the meadows were open prairies affording, with little or no labor, grass in abundance.

Some of the uplands had been cleared by the Indians and were favorite places for feeding. In those days the "new grant" was familiarly called, and with some reason, "Concord's sheep pasture."

In 1666, in pursuance of an order from the General Court, Richard Beers, of Watertown, and Thomas Noyes, of Sudbury, laid out the new grant, or Concord Village, as it was called, comprising the present

territory of Acton and portions of Carlisle and Littleton, and made their returu in the following year.

On January 12, 1669, a lease was made by Concord to Captain Thomas Wheeler, for the term of twenty-one years. of two hundred acres of upland and sixty acres of meadow, lying west of Nashoba Brook, in consideration of which he agreed to pay a yearly rent of £5 after the expiration of the first seven years, and to build a house forty feet in length, eighteen feet wide and twelve feet stud, "covered with shingles, with a payer of chimnes," also a barn forty feet long, twenty-four feet wide, and twelve feet stud. These buildings were to be left at the end of the term for the use of the town, with thirty acres of land in tillage and sufficiently fenced.

He agreed further, and this was the main purpose of the lease, to receive and pasture the dry cattle belonging to the town's people, not to exceed one hundred and twenty in number nor to be fewer than eighty.

The cattle were to be marked by their owners and delivered to Captain Wheeler at his house, and the price was fixed at two shillings a head, payable one-third in wheat, one-third in rye or pease, and one-third in Indian corn.

The owners were to "keep the said herd twelve Sabboth dayes yearly, at the appointment and according to the proportion by said Thomas or his heires allotted."

The number of cattle received under this agreement fell below the lowest limit, and, in January, 1673, the terms of the contract were so modified that Captain Wheeler was eutitled to receive one shilling per head.

The town of Concord laid out a road to Thomas Wheeler's mill, the first grist-mill in Acton, located on the present site of Wetherbee's mill, as is proved by the foundations of the old mill found when digging for the present mill.

The canal now used is essentially the same as then used.

The mill was tended for the most part by women. A Mrs. Joseph Barker had charge among the last.

Going up from that site to the present saw-mill we find on the east side of the dam, near the road, the abutments of what were old iron works, called at the time a forge.

Here they had a trip-hammer and other implements and conveniences for working in iron. Joseph Harris made the latches and the iron-work from this forge for the first meeting-house.

The ore, which was smelted with charcoal, was bog iron ore found in the vicinity, some rods southwest. The building for the storing of the charcoal was a little distance up the old road going west, beyond the old walls. The charcoal bed is easily determined by striking a spade into the ground.

The old road went south of the present saw-mill and wound around near the old wall up to the brook at the foot of the hill, and there followed up the stream on the right side.

Captain Thomas Wheeler's house, supposed to be the first dwelling-house deserving the name, was west of the brook, not far from the wall where the old lilac bushes still stand, which belonged to his garden plot.

The spring near the brook, now enclosed in a barrel, was Captain Wheeler's well. There are evidences of an old orchard opposite on the south side of the brook. The Canadian plum-trees near by are said to have come from the stones of plums which the soldiers brought on their return from Canada in the French and Indian War.

Mrs. Joseph Barker, who tended the mill, lived at one time in Captain Wheeler's house. John Barker's house was a little to the right, on the east side of the stream, and farther west of Thomas Wheeler's house and barn.

Captain Thomas Wheeler died in 1676, from wounds received in his fight with the Indians at Brookfield. He was born a leader of men in war and peace. The narrative of the expedition of Captain Edward Hutchinson, after hostilities had begun at Plymouth, written by Captain Thomas Wheeler, is the epic of Colonial times. He was so associated with the first start in the settlement and business activities of Acton, before its incorporation, that we give space to the excellent synopsis of his narrative, by Charles H. Walcott, the Colonial historian of Concord:

"Captain Hutchinson was commissioned by the Council at Boston to proceed to the Nipmuck country, so called, in what is now Worcester County, and confer with the Indians there for the purpose of preventing, if possible, any extension of Philip's influence in that direction.

"Captain Thomas Wheeler, of Concord, who was already advanced in years, and had commanded the western troop of horse ever since its organization, was ordered to accompany Hutchinson with an escort of twenty or twenty-five men of his company. Accordingly they set out from Cambridge and arrived at Quabaug, or Brookfield, on Sunday, August 1st. Here they received information that the Indians whom they expected to meet had withdrawn to a place about ten miles distant towards the northwest. A detachment of four men was sent forward to assure them of the peaceable character of the expedition, and a meeting was agreed upon for the next morning, at eight o'clock, on a plain within three miles of the town.

"There was some apprehension of treachery, but prominent citizens of Brookfield not only expressed confidence in the good intentions of the savages, but declared their own willingness to be present at the conference, and Hutchinson decided that the appointment must be kept. The Indians, however, did not appear, and this fact, together with other suspicious

circumstances, led the sagacious Wheeler to think that to venture further would be unwise. But Hutchinson was unwilling to abandon his mission with nothing accomplished, and, in deference to his wishes, the order was given to advance towards a swamp where the savages were supposed to be lurking.

"As they proceeded the narrowness of the path, with the swamp on one side and a rocky hill on the other, forced men and horses to march in single file.

"Suddenly the war-whoop resounded, and the advancing column was assailed by a volley of arrows and bullets discharged from behind trees and bushes, killing eight men, wounding five, and throwing the line into disorder, which was materially increased by the difficulty of turning about or passing by in the straitened passage-way.

"Captain Wheeler spurred his horse up the hillside, when, finding himself unhurt and perceiving that some of his men had fallen under the fire of the enemy, who were now rushing forward to finish their work, he turned about and dashed boldly forward to attack them.

"The movement separated him for a few moments from his men. A well-directed shot killed his horse and brought the old man to the ground wounded, and it would soon have been all over with the brave captain, had not his son Thomas, who was also wounded, come to his rescue.

"Quickly dismounting, he placed his father in the saddle, and ran by his side until he caught another horse that had lost his rider, and so the two escaped with their lives, but suffering severely from their wounds.

"This was merely the beginning. Hutchinson had received a wound that caused his death in a few days, and now the task of extricating the command from its perilous situation devolved upon Captain Wheeler. It was performed in masterly fashion. Keeping to the open country and avoiding the woods, they retraced their way, with the assistance of friendly Indian guides, to the village of Brookfield, took possession of one of the largest and strongest houses, and fortified as best they could.

"They had not long to wait before the enemy appeared in superior numbers, and attacked the stronghold with vigor.

"The captain's disability brought to the front Lieutenant Simon Davis, another Concord man, who fought and prayed with a fervor that reminds one of the soldiers of Cromwell. To him, associated with James Richardson and John Fiske, of Chelmsford, the direction of affairs was entrusted.

"Two men, dispatched to Boston for assistance, were unable to elude the vigilance of the besiegers, and were obliged to return.

"The Indians piled hay and other combustibles against the side of the house and set fire to them, thus forcing the English to expose themselves in their efforts to extinguish the flames. Their bows shot arrows tipped with 'wild fire,' which alighted on the buildings within the enclosure and set them afire.

"To get their combustible materials close to the walls, a remarkable engine, fourteen rods long, was constructed by the savages of poles and barrels, which they trundled forward on its menacing errand. For three days and nights this horrible warfare continued.

"The besieged were compelled to witness the mutilation of their dead comrades who had fallen outside, and to endure as best they could the jeers and taunts of the foe.

"Rain came to the assistance of the little band by putting out the fires of their assailants and rendering it difficult to kindle new ones. Davis, who is said to have been of a 'lively spirit,' exhorted his men to remember that God was fighting on their side, and to take good aim before firing.

"The prayers and hymns of the soldiers, borne out on wings of fire and smoke, were answered by cries of the unregenerate heathen, who gave utterance to hideous groanings in imitation of the singing of psalms.

"Twice did brave Ephraim Curtis attempt to make his way through the enemy's line to go for succor. Twice was he compelled to return baffled. The third time, by great exertion and crawling for a considerable distance on his hands and knees, he succeeded in reaching Marlborough, where he gave the alarm, and on the evening of the 4th the garrison was overjoyed at the arrival of their old neighbor and friend, Major Willard, with a force of forty-six soldiers and five Indians, who, hearing at Marlborough of their distress, had altered his course to come to their relief.

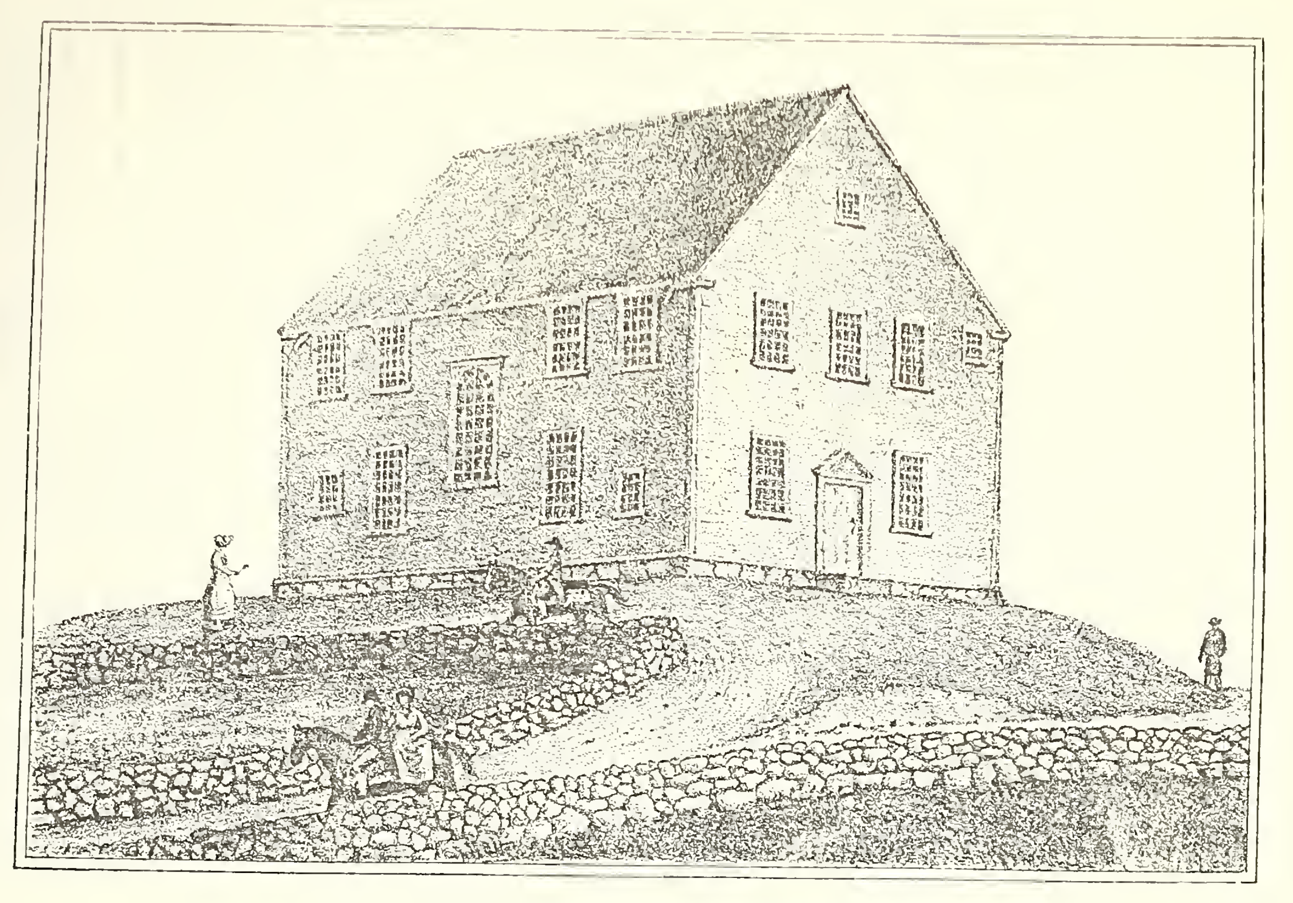
"Towards morning the Indians departed, having set fire to all the houses, except that which sheltered the whites.

"It has already been stated that Captain Wheeler was severely wounded, and his son was detained at Brookfield for several weeks by the injuries he had received.

"It is easy to believe that the Captain and the remainder of his troop received a hearty welcome on their return home. The town kept the 21st day of October, 1675, as 'a day of praise and thanksgiving to God for their remarkable deliverance and safe return.' It was a battle in which Concord men were foremost in the display of courage and the rarer qualities that constitute good leadership.

"The Indians appear to have behaved very badly from the beginning. They were guilty of an unprovoked and treacherous assault upon a party whose purpose was one of peace and friendship. The mission was an honorable one and faithfully discharged; and Wheeler and his men are deserving of praise for all time as brave soldiers who acquitted themselves nobly under the most trying circumstances."

Nathan Robbins appears to be the first owner of the land after Wheeler, and the land has passed from father to son ever since.



THE FIRST MEETING HOUSE. 1738.

Acts of Incorporation.—An act to incorporate the town of Acton, passed July, 1735.

"Whereas the inhabitants and proprietors of the Northwesterly part of Concord, in the County of Middlesex, called the Village or New Grant, have represented to this court that they labor under great difficulties by reason of their remoteness from the place of public worship and therefore desire that they and their estates, together with the farms called Willard Farms, may be set off a distinct and separate township for which they have also obtained the consent of the town of Concord:

"Be it therefore enacted by his Excellency the Governor, Council and Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, that the said Northwesterly part of Concord, together with the said farms be, and hereby are set off, constituted and erected into a distinct and separate township by the name of Acton, and agreeably to the following boundaries, namely, beginning at the Southwest corner of Concord old bounds, then Southwesterly on Sudbury and Stow line till it comes to Littleton line, then bounded Northerly by Littleton, Westford and Chelmsford, then Easterly by Billerica till it comes to the Northwest corner of Concord old bounds and by said bounds to the place first mentioned.

"And that the inhabitants of the lands before described and bounded be and hereby are vested with all the town privileges and immunities that the inhabitants of other towns within this Province are or by law ought to be vested with.

"Provided that the said inhabitants of the said town of Acton do, within three years from the publication of this Act, erect and finish a suitable house for the public worship of God and procure and settle a learned orthodox minister of good conversation and make provision for his comfortable and honorable support."

This vicinity was called Concord Village in those days.

Here was a happy, independent, industrious community, owning their lands, worshiping God in their own way and educating their children.

For seventeen years all went well, till Sir Edmund Andros appeared in Boston and tried to overthrow the charter which was served by the people as their safeguard and protection.

He prohibited town-meetings except once a year to choose officers.

Puritan flesh and blood could not stand this. Their town-meetings meant business, and now they were ordered to give them up. Taxes were laid without consulting those who were to pay them, and, worst of all, Andros declared all land titles null and void.

When the people showed their deeds from the Indians he said he cared no more for an Indian's signature than he did for the scratch of a bear's paw.

Then they pleaded what we in late days have called squatter sovereignty. But he said that no length of possession could make valid a grant from one who had no title.

Then the people rose to defend their homes and the rights of Englishmen.

On the 19th of April, 1689, the Concord Company, commanded by John Heald, the first selectman of Acton after its incorporation, marched to Boston to assist in the revolt which overthrew the Andros government.

In this way the men of Concord and Acton antedated the original 19th of April, which has since become the red-letter day in our history.

The First Meeting-House.—We will retrace our steps by the old Brooks tavern, to the spot opposite where now stands the stately school building of the Centre District.

We will have to pause a long time here before comprehending the situation. It is the spot where stood for seventy years that old landmark of the past—the first meeting-house of the town of Acton.

If you have seen the striking picture in the pamphlet of the centennial celebration, you will have been helped to an impression of the house and its surroundings.

You must stand yourself on that hill of Zion, for such it was to our early forefathers, and view the landscape o'er. On the south is the road that leads through the woods to the resting-place of the dead. On the east rises Annursneak Hill, hiding from view the peaceful homes of Mother Concord.

To the north of Annursneak is Strawberry Hill, whose brow strikes but eight feet below the brow of the former, having a view more commanding and more accessible. To the north and west are the delectable Hills, and towering above them all in the distance, Watatuck, Monadnock and Wachusett, old, familiar faces to every Acton boy and girl.

The building of this meeting-house is associated with the organization of Acton as a separate incorporated town. (See act of incorporation.) The location and erection of a meeting-house soon began to agitate the people. In October of the year of incorporation it was voted not to build that year, but "to set the meeting-house in the Center." By the centre was meant the point of intersection of lines drawn to the extreme limits of the town. This decision was not satisfactory to all the inhabitants.

At a meeting holden November 10, 1735, it was propounded whether the town would not reconsider their vote to have the meeting-house in the centre, and "agree to set it at some place near the center for convenience." It was voted not to reconsider. It was also voted not to do anything towards building the meeting-house the ensuing year.

At a meeting on the first Monday in December the same year it was again proposed to the town to reconsider the previous action, with reference to the location. The article was dismissed. But the minority had another meeting warned for December 29th, "To see if the Town will reconsider thar vote that they will set thare meeting-house in the Center, and agree to set it on a knowl with a grate many Pines on it, Laying South Easterly about twenty or thirty Rods of a black oak tree, whare the fire was made the last meeting, or to se if the Town will agree to set thare meeting-house on a knowl the North of an oak tree whare they last met, or to see if the Town will chuse two or three men to say which of the places is most convenient, or to se if the Commity think that knowl whereon stands a dead pine between the two aforesaid knowls, or to say which of the three places is most convenient."

At this meeting the location was changed to the

first "knowl" mentioned in the warrant. The site of the first meeting-house (a little to the south of where the Centre School-house now stands, near the two elms) was twenty or thirty rods southeast of the geographical centre of the town, as it was before the incorporation of Carlisle.

At the meeting which finally decided the location of the house, it was voted to begin that year and the dimensions were fixed upon.

The house was to be forty-six by thirty-eight feet in length and width and twenty feet in height.

At the next meeting (January 2, 1736) the former vote was reconsidered, and the vote was to have the house forty-six by thirty-six and "21 feet between joynts."

Voted, "That all the inhabitants of the town should have the offer to work at giting the timber for the house by the Commity."

Voted, "That Samuel Wheeler, Jonathan Parlin, Simon Hunt, John Shepherd and Daniel Shepherd be a Commity to manage ye affair of giting the timber for ye meeting-house."

Voted, "That the Commity should have six shillings per day for thar work, and the other Laborers five shillings per day."

Voted, "That there should be a Rate of seventy pounds made and assessed on the inhabitants of the town of Acton towards setting up the frame of the house."

May 10, 1736, it was voted "That the Selectmen should agree with Madam Cuming for ye land for ye meeting-house to stand on."

The deed of the land of the first meeting-house in Acton was dated January 25, 1737, signed by "Anne Cummings, wife of Mr. Alexander Cummings, Surgeon, now abroad, and attorney of said Alexander Cummings, being empowered and authorized by him."

This deed is written in a bold, large-lettered style, and is very plain to read—as but few specimens of penmanship seen in ancient or modern times.

It is in a fine state of preservation in the keeping of the town clerk.

The style of it reminds one of John Hancock's signature to the Declaration of Independence.

September 15, 1736, the town voted "To frame and Raise thar meeting-house before winter, and John Heald, Thomas Wheeler and Simon Hunt were chosen a Commity impowered to Regulate and Inspect and order ye framing and Raising ye meeting-house in Acton and like wise to agree with Carpenter or carpenters to frame ye house."

At the same meeting it was decided to do nothing about preaching for the ensuing winter.

November 1, 1736, *Voted*, "That they would board and shingle ye roofs and board and clap-board ye sides and ends, make window frames and casements and make ye door and crown of doors and windows, put troughs round, build ye pulpit and lay ye lower floor, ye work to be done by ye first of November next."

May 30, 1737, *Voted*, "To underpin the meeting-house by working each man a day."

Those who were delinquent were required to work a day "at high ways, by order of ye surveyor, more than thare equal part other ways wood have been."

"The work of pinting the underpining was let out to Jonathan Billings for 2£ 10*s*., which work he engaged to do spedily and Do it Wel."

Public worship was first held in the meeting-house in January, 1738.

At the time of Mr. Swift's ordination, November, 1738, it was far from being finished.

May 15, 1745, *Voted*, "To raise twenty pounds, old tenor, for finishing the meeting house that year."

Not till two years after this was the house completed. One should read the several dates in order to get a full impression of the slowness and difficulty of building a meeting-house in those colonial times.

There is a tradition that Lord Acton, of England, for whom the town may possibly have been named, offered a bell for the house of worship, but, having no tower, and the people feeling too poor to erect one, the present was declined.

When the house was finished (so-called), in 1747, there were no pews, except on the lower floor adjoining the walls of the house, and these were but sixteen in number. The four pews which were under and over each of the gallery stairs were built at intervals some years after. Several of the pew-holders from time to time obtained leave of the town to make a new window for their own accommodation and at their own expense. Each seems to have consulted his own fancy, both as to size and location. Little windows, in this way, of different sizes and shapes, came to be placed near the corners of the building.

In the body of the house, on each side the broad aisle, were constructed what were then called *the body seats*, and these together with the gallery were occupied by all who, through poverty or otherwise, were not proprietors of a pew.

Both in the body seats and in the gallery the men were arranged on the right of the pulpit and the women on the left, so that while the pew-holder could sit with his wife at church, all others were obliged to keep at a respectful distance.

The custom of "seating the meeting-house," as it was called, was found necessary, and was well calculated to prevent confusion and to insure particularly to the aged a certain and comfortable seat.

To give the better satisfaction the committee were usually instructed to be governed by *age* and the amount of *taxes* paid for the three preceding years. In the year 1757 they were also instructed to be governed by "other circumstances," at their discretion.

The report of that committee was not accepted and a new committee was chosen with the usual instructions. What the "other circumstances" were does

not appear. But it should have been known that any circumstances which depended on the estimation and discretion of a committee would fail to give satisfaction in a matter of such peculiar delicacy.

The new committee, however, seem to have restored harmony, and the same practice was continued during the existence of the old meeting-house.

Special instructions were given in favor of negroes, who were to have the exclusive occupation of the "hind seat" in the gallery.

How the youthful eyes lingered on the heels of Quartus Hosmer as they disappeared in his passage up the gallery-stairs, and how eagerly they watched the re-appearance in the gallery of his snow-white eyes, made more conspicuous by the eel-skin ribbon which gathered into a queue his graceful curls!

He lived at the house then occupied by Mr. Hosmer, near the turnpike corner on the way from the Centre to the South, midway between the two villages.

In 1769 "the hind parts" of the body seats were removed and four new pews were erected in their place. They were occupied by Thomas Noyes, Daniel Brooks, Joseph Robbins and Jonathan Hosmer. In the same year the house was new covered and glazed. In 1783 four other other pews were built and another portion of the body seats was removed. Three of these were sold and the fourth was "assigned for the use of the clergyman. It was through the banisters of this pew "old Mother Robbins," who sat in the body seats, used to furnish the centennial orator, Josiah Adams, Esq., the son of the pastor, those marigolds, peonies, and pink roses, decorated and perfumed with pennyroyal, southernwood, and tansy. She was indeed a most interesting old lady. No other public building has existed in the town so long as this stood. It was the house in which the first minister, Mr. Swift, preached during the whole of his long service of thirty-seven years, and in which Mr. Moses Adams, the second minister, officiated during the period of thirty years.

It was used not simply for religious worship, but for town-meetings. Here the money was voted for the first public schools, here the roads were laid out, here the poor were provided for, here Acton took its municipal action preliminary to the Revolutionary War, and here the first vote was passed recommending the Continental Congress to put forth the Declaration of Independence. The house stood and was used for these public purposes until 1808, when it was forsaken and after a few years torn down.

It would be a novel and impressive service could the persons of the present generation be transferred just for one day and witness the scene in that old meeting-house on the "knowl." We would like to catch just one look at that venerable row of the deacons' seat. We would like to see them there, each in his turn reading the psalm, a line at a time, and tossing it up for the use of the singers in the front gallery. We would like to hear the peculiar voices of James Billings and Samuel Parlin coming back as an echo. This practice of reading a line at a time, which, doubtless, had its origin in a want of psalm-books, became so hallowed in the minds of many that its discontinuance was a work of some difficulty.

In 1790 the church voted that it should be dispensed with in the afternoon, and three years afterwards they voted to abandon the practice.

On the Sabbath previous to the dedication of their second meeting-house, the people of Acton came from all directions, a whole family on a horse, toward the old meeting-house, to bid farewell to the place where their fathers had worshiped. After the whole town had come, entered the church, taken their seats in the old-fashioned square pews, sung some of Watts' hymns, and listened to a long and fervent prayer, their beloved minister, the Rev. Moses Adams, eloquently discoursed from the following text (Micah 2: 10): "Arise and let us depart, for this is not our rest." "Let us sing in his praise," the minister said. All the psalm-books at once fluttered open at "York."

A sprig of green caraway carries me there to the old village church and the old village choir.

> "To the land of the leal they have gone with their song,
> Where the choir and the chorus together belong,
> Oh! be lifted ye gates! let me hear them again,
> Blessed song; blessed Sabbath. Forever. Amen."

Rev. John Swift, the First Pastor.—We come to the fine mansion now owned and occupied by Deacon William W. Davis. Since its recent improvements it has become an important addition to the structural adornment of the Centre. It is near enough to the main avenue of the village to be easily seen, and, with its elevated front and majestic elm towering above the whole, it makes a fine perspective view on approaching the town from either road.

Mr. Eliab Grimes, who formerly occupied the place, was a successful farmer who tilled the land in the warm months of the year, and taught the schools in the winter, and had important trusts of service from the town as selectman and representative. Joash Keyes, David Barnard, Esq., in 1800; Deacon Josiah Noyes, in 1780; and Rev. John Swift, in 1740. One dwelling-house on this site was burned. Here is where Mr. Swift, the first pastor of Acton, for so long a period lived. Here we must pause long enough to get affiliated to the historical atmosphere, which seems to pervade the whole region around.

At a meeting of the town October 4, 1737, while the first meeting-house was being built, a committee was selected to supply the pulpit. The meetings were to begin the first Sunday in January. At a meeting on January 25, 1738, it was voted "to raise thirty pounds to glaze ye meeting-house, to raise fifty pounds to support preaching, and Joseph Fletcher should be paid for a cushing for ye pulpit out of the tax money." In the warrant for a meeting holden on March 28th was this article: "To se if ye town will appint a day for fasting and prayer to God, with

the advice and assistauce of sum of ye Neighboring Ministers for further directions, for the establishing ye gospel amoug them, as, allso, who and how many thay will advise with, as, allso, to chose a coumett to maunig ye affare and provide for ye Pulpit for ye time to come."

Voted "to appiut ye last Thursday of Mareh for fasting and prayer."

Voted "that thay will eall in five of ye Neighboring Ministers for advice in calling a Miuister, viz.: Mr. Lorin, of Sudbury; Mr. Cook, East Sudbury; Mr. Gardner, of Stow; Mr. Peabody, of Natick; and Mr. Rogers, of Littleton. Also, voted ye Selectmen be a Committ to Mannig ye affare, and provide for ye pulpit for ye futur." At this meeting John Cragin was appointed to take care of the meetiug-house, and thus he became Acton's first sexton.

May 9, 1738, the town invited Mr. John Swift, of Framingham, to settle with them as minister. It was voted to give him £250 as a settlement, and an annual salary of £150, to be paid in semi-annual instalments in Massachusetts bills, which at the time was equivalent to about £117 settlement, and £70 salary. The eoutracting committee were Johu Heald, Samuel Wheeler, John Brooks, Ammiruhammah Faulkuer, Simon Hunt and Joseph Fletcher. The salary offered was to rise or fall with the price of the principal neeessaries of life. In the year 1754, the following list of articles considered as principally neeessary for consumption in a minister's family were reported by a town's eommittee, with the current prices in 1735 annexed, and were adopted as a basis for regulating the amount of Mr. Swift's salary. The signatures of the parties on the record show their entire satisfaction.

"30 b. Corn, at 6*s*.; 20 b. Rye, at 10*s*.; 500 lb. Pork, at 8*d*.; 300 lb. Beef, at 5*d*.; 25 lb. wool, at 3*s*. 6*d*.; 15 lb. Cotton, at 4*s*. 6*d*.; 50 lb. Flax, at 1*s*. 3*d*.; 56 lb. sugar, at 1*s*. 4*d*.; 20 gals. Rum, at 8*s*.; 80 lb. Butter, at 1*s*. 4*d*.; 2 Hats, at £3; 10 pr. shoes, at 15*s*."

The contract and agreement between Rev. John Swift and the town of Aeton is here copied as an instructive chapter on the times:

"Whare-as the Town of Acton at a Town Meeting Duly warned May 19th, 1738, did invite ye Rev. John Swift into ye work of ye ministry among them, and did all so pass a vote to give him two hundred and fifty Pounds towards a settlement, and a hundred and fifty Pounds Sallary yearly and since, at a town meeting October ye 10th, 1738, did vote that said Sallary should be kept up to ye value of it and paid in every half years End yearly, and did also chuse John Heald, Joseph Flexcher, John Brooks, Samuel Wheeler and Simon Hunt as a Committ to contract with the Said Mr. Swift about ye said Sallary, the contract and agreement between said Mr. Swift and said Committ is as follows:

"1st. That said sallary shall be paid According to ye ould tenure of the Massachusetts Bills or in an equivalency of such Bills of pr. cent or lawful currency as shall pass from time to time.

"2d. That the value of said sallary be kept up from time to time according as when It was voted on May afore according to ye prise of the necessary provisions of life.

"3d. That the payment of said sallary continue so long as said Mr. Swift shall continue In ye work of ye ministry in said Acton and In witness her of said Mr. Swift and said Committe have hereunto set their hands this 30th day of October A. D., 1738. John Swift, John Heald, Joseph Fletcher, Ammie Faulkner, Simon Hunt, John Brooks.

"Ordered on this book of Records,

"Attest SIMON HUNT, *Town Clerk*."

The contract was faithfully kept by the people of Acton, and the pastorate of Mr. Swift continued till his death, November 7, 1775, thirty-seven years lacking one day, at the age of sixty-two years.

The small-pox prevailed as an epidemic in Acton that year. Mr. Swift took the disease and never afterwards was able to preach.

Mr. Swift was ordained ou the 8th day of November, 1738. No particulars of the ordination can be gathered either from the town or ehurch records, except that "the Council had entertainment at the house of Mr. Joseph Fletcher."

Mr. Swift was the only son of the Rev. John Swift, of Framingham. He was born in Framingham, in 1713; graduated at Cambridge in 1733, and at the time of his ordination was twenty-five years of age. He was little above the common height, rather slender, his manners and address agreeable and pleasant. He was somewhat economical in the management of his affairs, but kind to the poor and a good neighbor. He was opposed to excess and extravagance of every kind and to promote peace and good feeling was his constant care. He had some singularities of character, but led an exemplary life, and retained the affections and respect of his people through a ministry of thirty-seven years. His preaching was practical, plain and serious, though it is said he had occasionally some unusual expressions in the pulpit which were rather amusing.

As was the custom of many clergymeu of his day, he used to receive lads into his family for instruction in the studies preparatory to college. In one year five young men were presented by him at Cambridge, and all passed the examination and were admitted. There are a few scraps in his handwriting which appear to discover considerable ease in the use of the Latin language, and in his church records there are many similar instances, but they are so attended with abbreviations and characters that it is not always easy to discover their import. Some extracts from his church records are given. The volume is a very small one. It begins without caption or heading, and there is nothing to indicate what the contents are to be.

The first entry is in the following words: "Nov. 8, 1738. I was ordained pastor of the church in Acton." He speaks of himself in the same manner in all parts of the record.

Under date of June 14, 1739, is the following reeord, "It being lecture day, after the blessing was pronounced I desired the church to tarry, and asked their minds concerning the remainder of the elements after communion and they voted 'I should have 'em.'"

"Sept. 11, 1744. I made a speech to the church thus: 'Brethren, I doubt not but you have taken

notice of the long absence of brother Mark White, Jr., from the ordinances of God in this place. If you request it of him to give us the reasons of his absence some time hence, I desire you would manifest it by an uplifted hand. Whereupon there was an affirmative vote.' June 7, 1749 notations of sacraments ceased here, because I recorded them in my almanac interlineary."

The book is a curious intermixture of Latin and English accounts of admissions to the church, baptisms, administrations of the Supper and dealings with delinquents, and it is evident that Mr. Swift had little more in view than brief memoranda for his own use. He writes: "I regret that I did not at the beginning of my ministry procure a larger book, and keep a more particular and extensive record. I hope my successor will profit by this hint." Rev. Mr. Swift lived to see the opening of the Revolutionary War. His preaching, prayers and influence at the time doubtless helped in the preliminaries of that eventful struggle.

Thomas Thorp, in his deposition given in 1835 to the selectmen and committee of the town, says: "On the morning of the 19th of April, 1775. I had notice that the regulars were coming to Concord. I took my equipments and proceeded to Capt. Davis's house. I passed the house of Rev. Mr. Swift. His son, Doctor John Swift, made me a present of a cartridge-box, as he saw I had none. I well remember there was on the outside a piece of red cloth in the shape of a heart."

On that memorable morning Capt. Davis marched his company by Mr. Swift's house to the music of fife and drum. The blood in the pastor's veins quickened at the sight and sound, and he waved his benedictions over the heroic company as they passed on to the scene of action. He helped to sustain the widow in her first shock as Davis came lifeless to a home he had left but a few hours before, strong and vigorous. Mr. Swift did not see the end, only the beginning of the struggle.

In November of the same year a funeral cortege was seen wending its way to the old cemetery in Acton. They were following the remains of their first pastor. A mound and a simple marble slab mark his grave. Four pine trees of stately growth sing their requiem over his precious dust as the years come and go. All honor to the dear memory of him who laid the foundation stones of this goodly church of Acton, and did so much to form the peaceful, frugal character of its inhabitants.

"Honor and blessings on his head
While living—good report when dead.'

We do not easily part from a spot so suggestive of the stirring events, parochial, ministerial, civil and military, which centralized in the early days of Acton, on these very acres. We will leave the homestead in the care of Deacon Davis, who has spent the best energies of his life in improving and adorning the premises, and whose sympathies are in full accord with all the memories of the past and with all the prospects of the future.

MUSIC IN THE FIRST CHURCH.—In 1785 the singers were directed, for the first time to sit together in the gallery.

In 1793 the practice of performing sacred music by reading the line of the hymn as sung was discontinued. A church Bible was presented in 1806 by Deacon John White, of Concord.

In the church records, as far back as March 23, 1797, is found the following vote: 1st. "It is the desire of the church that singing should be performed as a part of public worship in the church and congregation.

"2d. It is the desire of the church that the selectmen insert an article in the warrant for the next May meeting to see if the town will raise a sum of money to support a singing-school in the town and that the pastor apply to the selectmen in the name of the church for that purpose.

"3d. Voted to choose five persons to lead the singing in the future.

"4th. Voted to choose a committee of three to nominate five persons for singers."

Deacon Joseph Brabrook, Deacon Simon Hunt and Thomas Noyes were chosen this committee. They nominated Winthrop Faulkner, Nathaniel Edwards, Jr., Simon Hosmer, Josiah Noyes and Paul Brooks, and these persons were chosen, by vote, to lead the singing in the future.

Voted, "It is the desire of the church that the singers use a Bass Viol in the public worship, if it be agreeable to them.

Voted, "It is the desire of the church that all persons who are qualified would assist the singing in the public worship."

Deacon Simon Hosmer played for thirty years.

DEACONS IN THE FIRST CHURCH.—Joseph Fletcher, chosen December 15, 1738, died September 11, 1746, aged 61; John Heald, chosen December 15, 1738, died May 16, 1775, aged 82; Jonathan Hosmer, died 1775, aged 64; John Brooks, died March 6, 1777, aged 76; Samuel Hayward, chosen September 29, 1775, died March 6, 1795, aged 78; Francis Faulkner, chosen September 29, 1775, died August 5, 1805, aged 78; Joseph Brabrook, chosen September 29, 1775, died April 28, 1812, aged 73; Simon Hunt, chosen April 19, 1792, died April 27, 1820, aged 86; Josiah Noyes, chosen March 27, 1806, dismissed and removed to Westmoreland, N. H., October 16, 1808; Benjamin Hayward, chosen March 27, 1806, excused June 15, 1821; John Wheeler, chosen April 18, 1811, died December 17, 1824, aged 64; John White, chosen April 18, 1811, died April 3, 1824, aged 54; Phineas Wheeler, chosen June 15, 1821, died in 1838, aged 65; Daniel F. Barker, chosen June 15, 1821, died in 1840; Silas Hosmer, chosen June 15, 1821.

WOODLAWN CEMETERY.—This is now a very old and extensive burying-ground, pleasantly located, with a slight natural grade descending from the north to the south—the new portion towards East Acton being level and of light, dry soil adapted to burying purposes. It has two pumps, a hearse-house and receiving-tomb, and a beautiful pine grove shielding from the summer's sun where public services can be held. Many ornamental monuments and slabs have been erected in later years.

The original deed to the town for the opening of Woodlawn Cemetery was given by Nathan Robbins January 16, 1737, and contained one-half an acre. The second deed was given by Joseph Robbins December 11, 1769, a small tract adjoining southeast corner. The third deed was dated November 2, 1812; the fourth deed was dated January 1, 1844; the fifth deed was dated August 22, 1862. The present area (1890) is between eleven and twelve acres. The oldest date noticed upon any of the slabs is 1743.

In earlier times slabs were not erected—a simple stone marking the place of burial. Many have been buried here whose graves have no outward token of their locality. A recent careful count of the graves in this cemetery makes the number 1671, showing that here lie the remains of a population nearly if not quite equal to those above ground on the present limits of the town. The location is about midway between East Acton and the Centre, and easily reached by good roads leading from all the villages and the other portions of the town.

Within the memory of some now living, before the new road from the Centre was laid out and the only passage was by the present site of Mr. Moorhouse, winding through a continuous line of woods, growing darker till the gurgling waters of Rocky Guzzle were heard just as the grave-stones struck the eye, it required more nerve than most boys and girls had in those more superstitious times to travel that way alone in the night or even in day-time. The hair would stand on end in spite of one's self as one reached the sombre retreat. Few were brave enough to pass that way to mill unattended unless necessity or the calls of love impelled.

With the more cheery aspect of the thoroughfares in later years and with the mind cleared of the ghost, stories, which, if heard, are discredited on the spot and expelled at once from the memory, one can travel that way and sing or whistle as he goes by, conscious of none but helpful companionship.

A few epitaphs on the tomb-stones are here given, which may be of interest. The oldest slabs of unique design have at the top the Latin words *Memento mori*, which means, remember that you must die.

Erected in memory of Mr. Josiah Hayward, who departed this life May 6, 1783, aged 76.

He was a gentleman of worth and integrity, lived much respected for his private, social and public virtues; sustained divers civil offices with honor to himself and benefit to the community and particularly that of a representative for this town in the General Assembly, where he showed himself a warm friend of his country.

His memory is precious with the friends of virtue, religion and mankind.

He had life in his imagination and a good judgment, was a humble, patient Christian, ever ready to do good when he saw an opportunity.

Whoever you be that see my hearse,
Take notice of and learn this verse,
For by it you may understand,
You have not time at your command.

Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit that they may rest from their labors and their works do follow them.

On the marble slab at the tomb of Rev. John Swift:

Rev. John Swift died November 7, 1775, aged 62 years.

He was ordained as the first pastor of the Congregational Church of Acton, November 8, 1738, and continued in this relation until death. He was a plain, practical and serious preacher and a faithful minister.

Memento Mori.

In memory of Major Daniel Fletcher, who departed this life December 15, 1776, in the 59th year of his age.

'Tis dangers great he has gone through
From enemies' hands his God him drew
When fighting for that noble cause,
His country and its famous laws.
But now we trust to rest has gone
Where wars and fightings there is none.

Here lies buried the body of Deacon Joseph Fletcher, who departed this life September 11, 1746, in the 61st year of his age.

Memento Mori.

This stone is erected to preserve the remembrance of Deacon Samuel Hayward, and to remind the living that they must follow him. He died March 6, 1791, aged 78.

For many years he commanded the militia in this town. He was a kind husband and father, neighbor and a lover of his country, of good men, of religion and of the poor. The memory of such a man is blessed.

Erected in memory of Captain Stevens Hayward, who died October 6, 1817.

In memory of Deacon John White, who died April 3, 1821, in his 53d year.

Erected in memory of James Fletcher, who died December 9, 1815, aged 57, whose death was caused by the falling of a tree.

The rising morning don't assure,
That we shall end the day,
For death stands ready at the door,
To snatch our lives away.

The following inscription is upon a large slab mounted in a horizontal position:

Sacred to the memory of Rev. Moses Adams, who was born in Framingham, October 16, 1749, graduated at Cambridge in 1771; was ordained in 1777, minister of the Church and congregation of Acton, and continued such till October 13, 1819, when he died on the 16th, which was the 70th anniversary of his birth.

His remains were placed beneath this stone. In his person he was dignified and modest, in his intellect vigorous and sound, in his heart benevolent and devout. His preaching was plain and practical, and his example added greatly to his power. The Scriptures were his study and delight, and while he exercised the protestant right of expounding them for himself, his candor toward the sincere who differed from him was in the spirit of the Gospel.

The good being whom he loved with supreme devotion was pleased to grant him many years of prosperity and gladness, and to add not a few of affliction and sorrow.

The first he enjoyed with moderation and gratitude, and in the last he exhibited the power of religion to sustain the practical Christian.

To his people and his family he was ardently attached and spent his life in exertions and prayers for their welfare, and they have placed this inscription to testify their reverence for his character and their love for his memory.

We cannot mourn the venerable shade whom angels led in triumph to the skies while following sorrow halted at the tomb.

THE NORTH ACTON CEMETERY.—Its location is between three and four miles from Acton Centre, on the road to Carlisle on the left hand. It is a very old burying-ground of small area and contains about 100 graves.

A few of the epitaphs are given :

Sacred to the memory of Captain Samuel Davis, who died July 4th, 1800, aged 59.

Retire my friends,
  Dry up your tears,
Here I must lie
  Till Christ appears.

In memory of —— Davis, who died September 16, 1815, aged 72.

Beneath this stone
  Death's prisoner lyes,
The stone shall move,
  The prisoner rise,
When Jesus with Almighty word,
  Calls his dead saints
To meet the Lord.

Memento Mori.

Here lies buried the body of Deacon John Heald, who departed this life May 16, 1775, in the 82d year of his age. His wife Mary died September 1, 1758, aged 61.

MOUNT HOPE CEMETERY, West Acton.—The West Acton Cemetery is gracefully located on elevated dry ground on the southern border of the village to the right as one passes from West to South Acton. It was opened in 1848. It is regularly laid out; has a new receiving-tomb and many modern slabs and several costly monuments of artistic design. It contains 271 graves and will have an increasing interest as the years go by.

THE BROOKS TAVERN.—Many now living can recall the gambrel roof two-story house at the foot of the hill, near where Mr. Moorhouse now lives, owned and occupied for many years by Mr. Nathaniel Stearns, the father of Mrs. Moses Taylor.

In the earlier days, before the present avenue and village at the Centre had been laid out, it stood as a conspicuous centre-figure facing the old meeting-house on the knoll, near where the school-house now stands.

The space between these two buildings was the Acton Common of ye olden time. Here were the military drills. Here were the town-meeting gatherings. This Stearns house was the hotel of the surrounding districts, and was known as the "Brooks Tavern," from Daniel Brooks, who occupied it in 1762, and Paul Brooks afterwards.

When the new meeting-house of 1807 was raised it was necessary to send to Boston to engage sailors accustomed to climb the perilous heights of a sea-faring life. They assisted in raising and locating the frame of the steeple. After the deed was accomplished they celebrated the exploit in feasting and dancing at the "Brooks Tavern."

Could the walls of this tavern be put upon the stand, and could they report all they have seen and heard in the line of local history, we would have a chapter which would thrill us with its heroic, humorous and tragic details.

THE FLETCHER HOMESTEAD.—As we leave this enchanted spot we notice the old stepping-stone of the meeting-house which Mason Robbins has erected in the wall at the right, and inscribed upon its broad face the memorial tablet of the bygone days. As we reach the house now owned and occupied by Mrs. Jonathan Loker, we see a lane to the left leading into the vacant pasture and orchard.

Pass into that lane for a few rods, and we reach the marks of an old cellar on the left. Here stood for many years, from 1794 on, the Fletcher homestead, where James Fletcher, the father of Deacon John Fletcher, and his brother James and Betsey, the sister, lived during childhood up to the years of maturity. A few feet from this ancient cellar-hole to the west is the site of the first Fletcher russet apple-tree. Childhood's memories easily recall the ancient unpainted cottage, the quaint old chimney with the brick-oven on the side, and the fire-place large enough for the burning of logs of size and length, and in front to the southeast a vegetable garden unmatched at the time for its culture and richness, and a large chestnut-tree to the south, planted by Deacon John, in early life.

The farm and homestead of Potter Conant, where Herbert Robbins now lives, on the cross-road, near Mr. Thomas Hammond's, was originally owned and occupied by James Fletcher, the father of Deacon John, and the birth-place of the latter. It was sold in exchange to Potter Conant, when Deacon John was four years old.

Thomas Smith, the father of Solomon Smith, died here in 1758. Solomon Smith, who was at the Concord fight, lived here at the time. His son, Luke Smith, was at Baltimore with his knapsack and gun, when the rioters mobbed the old Sixth on the 19th of April, 1861. Silas Conant lived here later. Betsey married a Mr. Shattuck, who moved to Landaff, N. H., and was the mother of Lydia Shattuck, the noted teacher at Mount Holyoke College. For forty-one years she was connected with the institution, as a pupil in the fall of 1848, and of late years has been the only instructor who had studied under Mary Lyon. She began to teach immediately after graduation. She made a specialty of natural history studies and was an enthusiastic botanist. She was associated with Professor Agassiz and Guyot in founding the Anderson School on Penikese Island, and was largely instrumental in awakening the interest which led to the founding of Williston Hall at South Hadley. Last summer she was made professor emeritus and granted a permanent home at the college. She died at the college November 2, 1889, aged sixty-seven years and five months.

THE SKINNER HOUSE.—This structure, of which the artist has given a genuine and beautiful sketch, is located in the southeast corner of Acton. Its stands on rising ground, just off the main road, facing a striking landscape towards the west, which includes

the Assabet River, with its picturesque scenery of banks, foliage and bridge. The artist stood with this view all in his rear, with what is embraced in the sketch in front. The house was built in 1801, by Mr. Simeon Hayward, the father of Mrs. Skinner. It was at the time one of the most costly and tasteful residences in the whole town and held that rank for years. Even at this late date it will stand criticism with many dwelling-houses more modern and expensive.

That majestic elm which towers above the house on the right is a hundred years old, and is a fair specimen of its cotemporaries distributed in all parts of the town. Without them Acton would be shorn of its distinguishing beauty. To the left is the carriage-house and in the background the barn.

This house took the place of the old one which stood just in the rear of this when Mrs. Skinner was born, August 14, 1796. Her grandfather, Josiah Hayward, moved on to this site in 1737, and had prominence in the early history of the town. He and his wife were allowed a seat in the first meeting-house in 1737, which was considered at the time a marked compliment to their intelligence and rank. On the south and east sides of the house are many thick trees to prevent accident in case of explosion at the powder-mills which are built a short distance away on the banks of the Assabet River.

Do not pause too long on the outskirts of this delightful homestead. A knock at the door will give you a welcome within. Here lives the oldest person in town,—Mrs. Mary Skinner. On meeting her, she takes you by the hand with a genial welcoming expression of the face which puts you at ease and makes you glad that you came.

One needs not the painted miniature done on ivory when she was twenty-one years old to assure the beauty of her youth. There are in her aged countenance no doubtful traces of that early charm, which made her a most attractive maiden. This interesting old lady never tires in telling of the frolics and festivities of her girlhood days, and the doings of the beaux and belles.

The young people for miles around used to meet at the wayside inn, where many a grand ball and party was given in honor of the lovely Jerusha Howe, the beauty of the town of Sudbury. Mrs. Skinner went to the dancing-school when eight years old.

Do not miss the kind offer of Miss Dole, the faithful attendant for years of the venerable Mrs. Skinner, to visit the spare parlors. Here, one may fairly revel among the old-fashioned portraits, curious-shaped dishes and antique furniture. In a corner of the parlor is a tiny piano of rosewood, with gilded finishing and ornaments made eighty years ago. It still has the clear sweet tone of ye olden time. Underneath the key-board are three drawers to hold music, each with little gilded knobs. There is some exquite music-copying which Mrs. Skinner did years ago. Also many pictures which she painted; but the most interesting of all are the white satin shoes which she wore when she was married. On a little printed slip neatly pasted inside of one of them the maker's name is given, mentioning that he kept a variety store, and also that at his establishment customers could have "rips mended gratis."

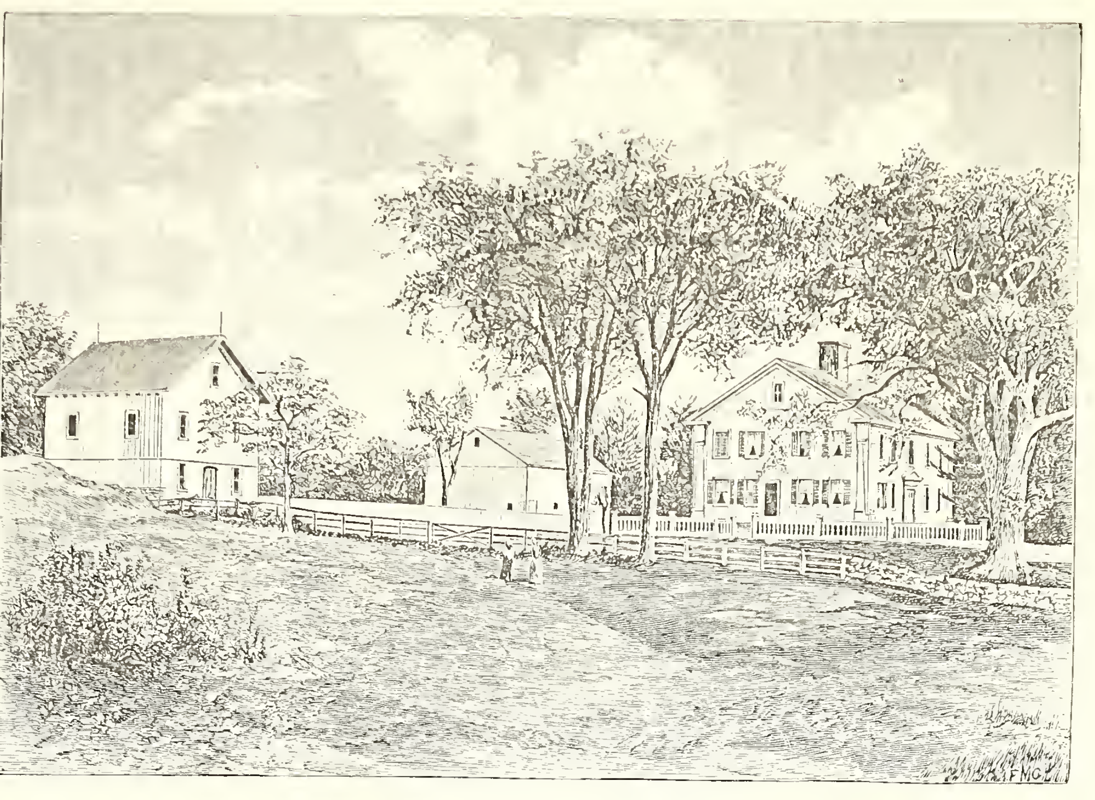
At the age of twenty-eight she married and removed to Andover, Mass., where her husband, Mr. Henry Skinner, was in business. She lived there about four years, but after the death of her husband and two children, who died within eleven days of each other, she returned to her home, which she left as a bride, and here she has lived ever since. At the age of sixty-four she found it necessary to wear glasses, but only for a short time, and now has remarkable eye-sight. She keeps well informed through the daily papers, and sits up until a late hour to have the news read to her.

All her near relatives are dead. Her father, Simeon Hayward, died June 5, 1803, when she was seven years old. Her son, Henry Skinner, born two months after the decease of her husband, graduated from Harvard College before he was eighteen years old, in 1846—a civil engineer—died February 18, 1867. Her sister Betsey, who lived in the same house with her, with her husband, Rev. Samuel Adams, have both been dead for years. Betsey, when a young maiden, by the election of the ladies of Acton, presented to the Davis Blues an elegant standard and bugle. The address on that occasion was marked with sentiment and culture. It closes in these words,—"Should ever our invaded country call you to the onset you will unfurl your banner and remember that he whose name it bears sealed his patriotism with his blood."

Her attendant for years says Mrs. Skinner has a most lovely disposition. You allude to the many changes and trials her of life, and she says, "My life has been a favored one." She never speaks an unkind word, is never out of patience with persons or things. No matter what happens, it is always right—all right. She has been kind to so many. No one knows how many she has helped. No matter who comes with a subscription paper she listens patiently and gives cheerfully. When subscribing to bear the expense of her husband's portrait and of the sketch of her historic homestead, she said, "I may not be alive when the picture is taken, but it may do some one some good."

In sickness her aim seems to be to relieve the care of attendance. Only yesterday she quoted the remark: Every person has three characters: 1. The one which their neighbors give. 2. The one which they themselves give. 3. The one which they really are. They all seem to be blended in one in Mrs. Skinner.

Mrs. Skinner has been for the larger portion of her



SKINNER HOMESTEAD.

life a consistent member and liberal patron of the Acton Church. She gave the pulpit to the new meeting-house. Sitting in her cosy room, with its quaint ornaments and substantial furnishings, her white hands resting on her lap, she is a never-to-be-forgotten picture of serene, happy old age, while all about her there appears a peace above all earthly dignities—a still and quiet conscience.

THE OLD PARSONAGE.—Town Records, January, 1780:

"*Voted*, that the select man appoint a town-meeting Tuesday, Jan. 25th, 1780, at one o'clock P.M., to see if the town will raise a sum of money to make good that part of the Rev. Moses Adams' settlement that is to be laid out in building him a dwelling-house, and pass any other votes that may be thought proper when met Relating to settlement or the pay of the workers that have Don Labour on said house.

"Acton, Jan. 31, 1780."

The town being met according to adjournment by reason of the severity of the weather adjourned the meeting to the house of Caroline Brooks, in order to do the business, and proceeded as follows: On the second article it was voted "to allow the artificers that worked at Rev. Mr. Adams' house 15 dollars per day and ten Dollars for common Labour, 24*s.* per mile for carting."

"*Voted*, three thousand Pounds to make good the one Hundred Pound of Rev. Mr. Adams' settlement.

"*Voted*, three Thousand five hundred and sixty to Pounds to the Rev. Mr. Adams for his sallary this present year."

These figures show the depreciation of the currency during the Revolutionary period.

We proceed in our historic ramble, reluctant to part from the ancient "Knowl" where stood the First Church of Acton for threescore years and ten.

We drift on this tidal-wave of past reminiscences, and the drift takes us at once down the road a few rods to the northwest, where sits to-day so gracefully the old parsonage of our fathers and grandfathers and mothers and grandmothers of ye olden time. It faces the gentle slope in front to the southeast, looking towards the Hill of Zion on the "Knowl" and ye old Acton Common and the Brooks Tavern just beyond, now all gone to rest. It is a quaint old mansion, with a stately elm standing over it in all the majesty of years. The structure was built five years after the Concord Fight, 1780.

The side of the house faces the street and is three stories. Its front, built on a hillside, is half three and the other half two stories. A long flight of steps leads up to a large portico, which makes the front entrance overlooking the green fields and orchards just beyond. The chimney rises in the centre of the roof some three feet high and six feet wide. Its four flues answer all household purposes. The lilac bushes and the yellow lily bed on the roadside, just outside the wall, are still flourishing as in the earliest recollection of the oldest persons now living.

Moses Taylor, Esq., has done a great service to the future public by purchasing this estate and restoring the faded tints of early days—green blinds, light yellow, the main color of the house, with white trimmings. It is now presentable to the eye of the antiquarian, and even to the modern critic.

When laying out the new sidewalk leading up to the village, Mr. Taylor said: "Spare the lilac bushes and lily-bed. They shall remain for old memory's sake. I used to go by these loved relics in school-day times, and they are to me now even dearer and sweeter than when a boy."

Mrs. Adams, the wife of Rev. Moses Adams, the second minister, a very energetic lady and a notable housekeeper, kept store in the basement story. Keeping store, added to her maternal duties, as the mother of three sons and three daughters, house-work, spinning, weaving, knitting and cheese-making, to say nothing of parish duties, must have made for her a busy life, and this part of the house at least must have been a lively centre for the earthly activities of the parsonage. The upper part of the house was the scene of the pastor's private study, and contained rooms neatly furnished for those times and ever ready to receive guests from abroad.

Rev. Moses Adams, the first pastor occupying this house, had been selected with great care. In May, 1776, the town chose a committee to take advice of the president of the college and the neighboring ministers and to engage four candidates to preach four Sabbaths each in succession. One of the four was Moses Adams. He, like his predecessor, Rev. Mr. Swift, was a native of Framingham. He was born October 16, 1749, and graduated at Cambridge, 1771. On the 29th of August, 1776, it was voted "to hear Mr. Moses Adams eight Sabbaths longer on probation," and on the 20th of December "to hear Mr. Moses Adams four Sabbaths longer than is agreed for."

In the mean time the church had appointed the 2d day of January for a fast, and had invited the neighboring ministers to attend on the occasion. On the 8th day of January they made choice of Mr. Adams to take the oversight and charge of the church. The choice was confirmed by the town on the 15th of the same month. At an adjournment of that meeting, on the 17th of March, an offer was made of £200 settlement and £80 salary in lawful money, according 6*s.* 8*d.* per ounce. It was also voted to provide him with fire-wood the first year after his settlement. The invitation was accepted, and Mr. Adams was ordained on the 25th day of June, 1777, then in his twenty-eighth year.

He was the only child of respectable but humble parents. By the death of both parents he became an orphan at the age of seven years. The property left him was sufficient, with economy, to defray the expense of a public education. The first years of his ministry were attended with considerable pecuniary embarrassment, for, although precaution was taken to make the salary payable in silver, yet the value of *that* compared with the necessaries of life very considerably decreased.

The promptness and spirit with which the people of Acton met the calls of the Government for the support of the war rendered them less able to pay their minister. His settlement had been relied on to meet the expenses of building a house, which a young and increasing family made a matter of necessity. The settlement was not wholly paid for several years. The subject was agitated at two meetings in 1781, and in February, 1782, the selectmen were directed to pay the remaining balance.

In 1783 Mr. Adams, in a communication which is recorded, made a statement of £123, which he considered his due for balances unpaid of his three first years' salary, accompanied by an offer to deduct £43 if the remainder should be paid or put on interest. It is not certain whether this was a legal or merely an equitable claim, but the town promptly acceded to the proposal. In justice to the town it should be observed that so far as it regards their pecuniary dealings with their two first ministers a liberality and sense of justice is manifest, with few exceptions, from the beginning to the end of the records. There were other negotiations in regard to the salary. It was all, however, in perfect good feeling and in accordance with the respect and affection which existed between Mr. Adams and his people through the whole period of his long ministry of forty-two years.

He died on the 13th of October, 1819, and was buried on the 16th, which was the seventieth anniversary of his death.

In consequence of his request in writing—which was found after his decease—no sermon was delivered at his funeral. To anticipate the silent tear was more to him than the voice of praise. He had days of prosperity and he knew how to enjoy them. He witnessed seasons of sorrow and bore them with rare equanimity. In public duties, in social intercourse, in the schools, in the transactions of private life, he carried himself with a genial but serene self-poise commanding universal confidence, veneration and love.

The house where such a man lived and died, whose walls witnessed the mental struggles of his closet and study, the composition of his four thousand sermons, the training and education of his children, and of those from abroad, fitting for college under his care, is a hallowed retreat calling for a tender appreciation by all who shall hereafter gaze upon this memorial structure. The following items have been copied from the town records, in regard to his children. Moses, son of Moses and Abigail Adams, born November 28, 1777; Mabby, daughter, born January 21, 1780; Josiah, born November 3, 1781; Joseph, born September 25, 1783; Clarissa, born July 13, 1785.

We must not leave the site too hastily; still another chapter of records opens upon our vision right here and now.

The pulpit was constantly supplied by the town during the last sickness of Mr. Adams, and after his decease. In the next month a committee was chosen to procure a candidate. They engaged Mr. Marshall Shedd, who was graduated at Dartmouth in 1817, and was then a member of the Rev. Mr. Greenough's church in Newton, Massachusetts, which was his native town.

On the 20th of February, 1820, Mr. Shedd was unanimously invited by the church to become their pastor, and on the 13th of March the town unanimously voted to give him a call. Five hundred dollars was offered as a settlement, which was increased by subscription and the salary was fixed at six hundred dollars, with fifteen cords of wood. In case of permanent inability the salary was to be reduced to two hundred dollars. This liberal offer was accepted, and on the 10th of May Mr. Shedd was ordained pastor of the church and minister of the congregation in Acton.

The ordaining council consisted of Mr. Willard, of Boxborough; Mr. Newell, of Stow; Mr. Greenough, of Newton; Mr. Litchfield, of Carlisle; Dr. Ripley, of Concord; Dr. Homer, of Newton; Mr. Foster, of Littleton; Dr. Holmes, of Cambridge; Mr. Blake, of Westford; Dr. Pierce, of Brookline; Mr. Noyes, of Needham; Mr. Hulbert, of Sudbury, with delegates from their respective churches! Such a combination of religious opinions in an ordaining council obtained by a unanimous vote of both church and congregation was very remarkable at that period, and discovers a liberality of Christian feeling which is worthy of all imitation.

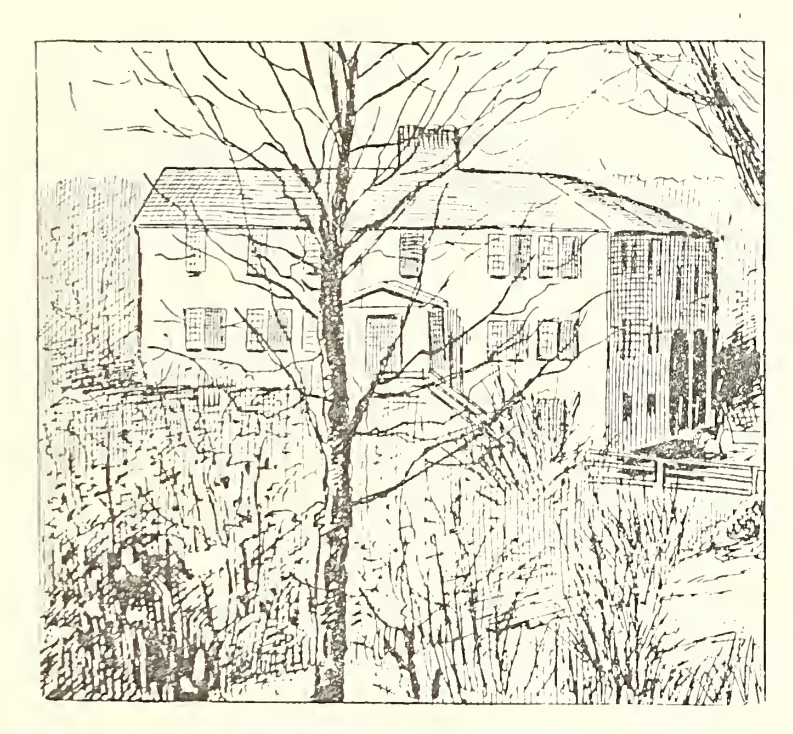
Mr. Shedd was a pious, peaceable and exemplary minister, with more than ordinary talents and industrious in the discharge of duty. It was a time of great religious conflict. The heat of controversy became intense in all this vicinity of towns, resulting in the division of churches and congregations.

Parochial difficulties multiplied in all directions. Acton began to feel the irritations of the epoch. Mr. Shedd labored to harmonize the colliding elements, but the lines of divergence were too sharply drawn, and he bowed to the inevitable and gracefully retired.

Providence opened to him, as he thought, a more hopeful field for himself and family in what was then the new settlements in Northern New York, he decided to enter it, and in May, 1831, the corporation, which was now called a parish, concurred with the church in granting Mr. Shedd's request that his connection might be dissolved, and in the same month that agreement was confirmed by an ecclesiastical council.

Mr. Shedd came to Acton a married man, his companion having been born in Newton, like himself a Miss Eliza Thayer, daughter of Obadiah Thayer. He resided with Mr. Shedd in Acton at the parsonage.

He is still remembered by some of the oldest inhabitants of Acton as a man of great excellence of character, a rare mingling of refined and positive traits, an unswerving advocate of truth and righteousness. He died in Hillsborough, N. Y., in 1834.



THE OLD PARSONAGE.

The first year of Mr. Shedd's pastorate was eventful. On the 10th of May he was ordained. On the 21st of June he became the father of one of the most notable and worthy men now living. It is no ordinary honor for the parsonage and the town to be the birth-place of Rev. Prof. William G. T. Shedd, D.D.

The simple surface record of the man runs thus: born in Acton, June 21, 1820; graduated at the University of Vermont, Burlington, in 1839; at Andover Seminary in 1843; pastor of Brandon, Vermont, 1843–45; Professor of English Literature in the University of Vermont, 1845–52; Professor of Sacred Rhetoric and Pastoral Theology in Auburn Seminary, 1852–54; Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Pastoral Theology in Andover Seminary, 1854–62; co-pastor of the Brick Presbyterian Church, New York City, 1862–63; Professor of Sacred Literature in Union Theological Seminary, New York City, 1863–74; Professor of Systematic Theology in Union Seminary since 1874.

His publications are: History of Christian Doctrine, Theological Essays, Literary Essays, Homiletics and Pastoral Theology, Sermons to the Natural Man, Translation of Guericke's Church History, Translation of Theremin's Rhetoric.

He has adorned every position which he has touched. He is a scholar, a gentleman, an author, a preacher, a philosopher, a theologian, a Christian of the very highest order in the land, and so acknowledged even by those not always agreeing with his views.

He has not forgotten his birth-place or the scenes of his boyhood, though leaving the place when eleven years old and visiting it but twice since that time.

He remembers his old family physician, Dr. Cowdry; Deacon Silas Hosmer, one of the officers of the church, who died at the age of eighty-four; the two Fletchers, Deacon John and his brother James; the Faulkner mills, where there were about a dozen houses when last he saw it; East Acton, the place where he went to take the stage, upon the main road, when great journeys were to be made; Wetherbee's Hotel and some fine old elms, which he hopes are still standing; Deacon Phineas Wheeler and his grist-mill, to which he often carried the grist; the Common in Acton Centre, now covered with fine shade-trees, where there was not a single tree of any kind when he played ball upon it in his boyhood; those inscriptions upon the grave-stones around the monument which he used to read when a boy in the old cemetery; the huckleberry and blueberry bushes still growing in the same rough pastures, where he has picked many a quart.

He is now in his seventieth year, but there are some still living who recall his early days on the street and at the parsonage. He was a model youth, and had in him at the start elements which all recognized as the promise of his future career, if his life should be spared.

The following tributes to the memory of his father and mother were received in a letter from him dated December 23, 1889: "My father lived to the great age of eighty-five, dying in Hillsborough, N. Y., in 1872. After leaving Acton he was never settled as a pastor, but for many years, until age and infirmities prevented, he preached to the feeble churches in the region, and did a great and good work in the moral and religious up-building of society. My mother died soon after our family removed to Northern New York, which was in October, 1831. She departed this life in February, 1833. I was only twelve years of age, but the impress she made upon me in those twelve years is greater than that made by any other human being, or than all other human beings collectively."

In the same letter he gives this record of his two brothers—younger than himself—whom several old schoolmates, now living in Acton, remember with interest. Marshall died in Hillsborough, N. Y., in 1879, in the Christian faith and hope. The younger brother, Henry S., is living, and for more than twenty years has been connected with the post-office in this city (New York).

The Acton town records give the following dates of birth: William G. Thayer Shedd, son of Marshall and Eliza Shedd, born June 21, 1820; Marshall, born April 11, 1822; Henry Spring Shedd, born February 21, 1824; Elizabeth Thayer Shedd, born September 9, 1825. In his last brief visit to Acton several years ago he said in conversation: "The old scenes and persons in Acton come back from my boyhood memories with outlines of distinctness more and more vivid as the years go by."

Revolutionary Preliminaries.—At a special meeting in January, 1768, the town voted "to comply with the proposals sent to the town by the town of Boston, relating to the encouragement of manufacture among ourselves and not purchasing superfluities from abroad."

In September of that year Joseph Fletcher was chosen to sit in a convention at Boston, to be holden on the 22d of that month.

Action of the Town on the memorable 5th of March, 1770.

"Taking into consideration the distressed circumstances that this Province and all North America are involved in by reason(s) of the Acts of Parliament imposing duties and taxes for the sole purpose to raise a Revenue, and when the Royal ear seems to be stopt against all our humble Prayers and petitions for redress of grievances, and considering the Salutary Measures that the Body of Merchants and Traders in this province have come into in order for the redress of the many troubles that we are involved in, and to support and maintain our Charter Rights and Privilege and to prevent our total Ruin and Destruction, taking all these things into serious Consideration, came into the following votes:

"1st. That we will use our utmost endeavors to encourage and support the body of merchants and traders in their endeavors to retrieve this Province out of its present Distresses to whom this Town vote their thanks for the Constitutional and spirited measures pursued by them for the good of this Province.

"2. That from this Time we will have no commercial or social connection with those who at this time do refuse to contribute to the relief of this abused country—especially those that import British Goods contrary

to the Agreement of the body of merchants in Boston or elsewhere, that we will not afford them our Custom, but treat them with the utmost neglect and all those who countenance them.

"3. That we will use our utmost endeavors to prevent the consumption of all foreign superfluities, and that we will use our utmost Endeavors to promote and encourage our own manufactures.

"4. That the Town Clerk transmit a copy of these votes of the Town to the Committee of Merchants of inspection at Boston.

"A true copy attested.

"FRANCIS FAULKNER,
"*Town Clerk.*"

A committee of nine of the principal men of the town was appointed to consider the rights of the Colony and the violation of said rights, and draft such votes as they thought proper.

In January, 1773, the following report of the Committee was accepted and adopted:

"Taking into serious consideration the alarming circumstances of the Province relating to the violation of our charter rights and privileges (as we apprehend) by the British administration, we are of opinion: That the rights of the Colonists natural, ecclesiastical and civil are well stated by the Town of Boston.

"And it is our opinion that the taxing of us without our consent—the making the Governor of the Province and the Judges of the Supreme Court independent of the people and dependent on the Crown, out of money extorted from us, and many other instances of encroachments upon our said charter rights are intolerable grievances, and have a direct tendency to overthrow our happy constitution and bring us into a state of abject slavery.

"But we have a gracious Sovereign, who is the Father of America as well as Great Britain, and as the man in whom we have had no confidence is removed from before the Throne and another in whom we hope to have reason to put confidence placed in his stead, we hope that our petitions will be forwarded and heard, and all our grievances redressed.

"*Voted* also, that as we have no member in the house of Representatives, we earnestly recommend it to the Representative Body of this Province that you gentlemen, inspect with a jealous eye our charter rights and privileges, and that you use every constitutional method to obtain redress of all our grievances, and that you strenuously endeavor in such ways as you in your wisdom think fit, that the honorable judges of the Supreme Court may have their support as formerly agreeable to the charter of the Province.

"*Voted*, That the sincere thanks of the Town be given to the inhabitants of the Town of Boston for their spirited endeavors to preserve our rights and privileges inviolate when threatened with destruction.

In March, 1774, resolutions were passed with reference to paying duty on tea belonging to the East India Company.

In August, 1774, three of the principal citizens of the town were appointed delegates to a County Convention to be holden in Concord the 30th of that month.

In October of the same year two of the three delegates referred to above were chosen to sit in a Provincial Congress, which was to assemble at Concord soon, and at the same meeting a Committee of Correspondence was appointed.

In December, 1774, £25 was voted for the use of the Province, and a vote was passed to indemnify the assessors for not making returns to the British government. It was also voted to join the association of the Continental Congress, and a committee was appointed to see that all inhabitants above sixteen years of age signed their compliance, and that the names of those who did not sign should be reported to the Committee of Correspondence. Samuel Hayward, Francis Faulkner, Jonathan Billings, Josiah Hayward, John Heald, Jr., Joseph Robbins and Simon Tuttle were chosen a committee for that purpose.

In November, 1774, a company of minute-men was raised by voluntary enlistment, and elected Isaac Davis for their commander. The company by agreement met for discipline twice in each week, through the winter and spring till the fight at Concord.

In January the town voted to pay them eight pence for every meeting till the 1st of May, provided they should be on duty as much as three hours, and should attend within half an hour the time appointed for the meeting.

In the winter of 1774-7 the town had two militia companies, one in the south and one in the east.

In 1775 Josiah Hayward was twice chosen a delegate to the Provincial Congress at Cambridge.

In June, 1776, a vote was passed giving the following instructions to the representative of the town:

"*To Mr. Mark White:*

"SIR,—Our not being favored with the resolution to the Honorable House of Representatives, calling upon the several towns in this Colony to express their minds with respect to the important question of American Independence is the occasion of our not expressing our minds sooner.

"But we now cheerfully embrace this opportunity to instruct you on that important question.

"The subverting our Constitution, the many injuries and unheard of barbarities which the Colonies have received from Great Britain, confirm us in the opinion that the present age will be deficient in their duty to God, their posterity and themselves, if they do not establish an American Republic. This is the only form of Government we wish to see established.

"But we mean not to dictate—

"We freely submit this interesting affair to the wisdom of the Continental Congress, who, we trust, are guided and directed by the Supreme Governor of the world, and we instruct you, sir, to give them the strongest assurance that, if they should declare America to be a Free and Independent Republic, your constituents will support and defend the measure with their lives and fortunes."

In October, 1776, when a proposition was before the people that the executive and legislative branches of the Provincial Government should frame a Constitution for the State, the town of Acton committed the subject to Francis Faulkner, Ephraim Hapgood, Samuel Hayward, Ephraim Hosmer, Joseph Robbins and Nathaniel Edwards, who reported the following resolutions, which were unanimously accepted:

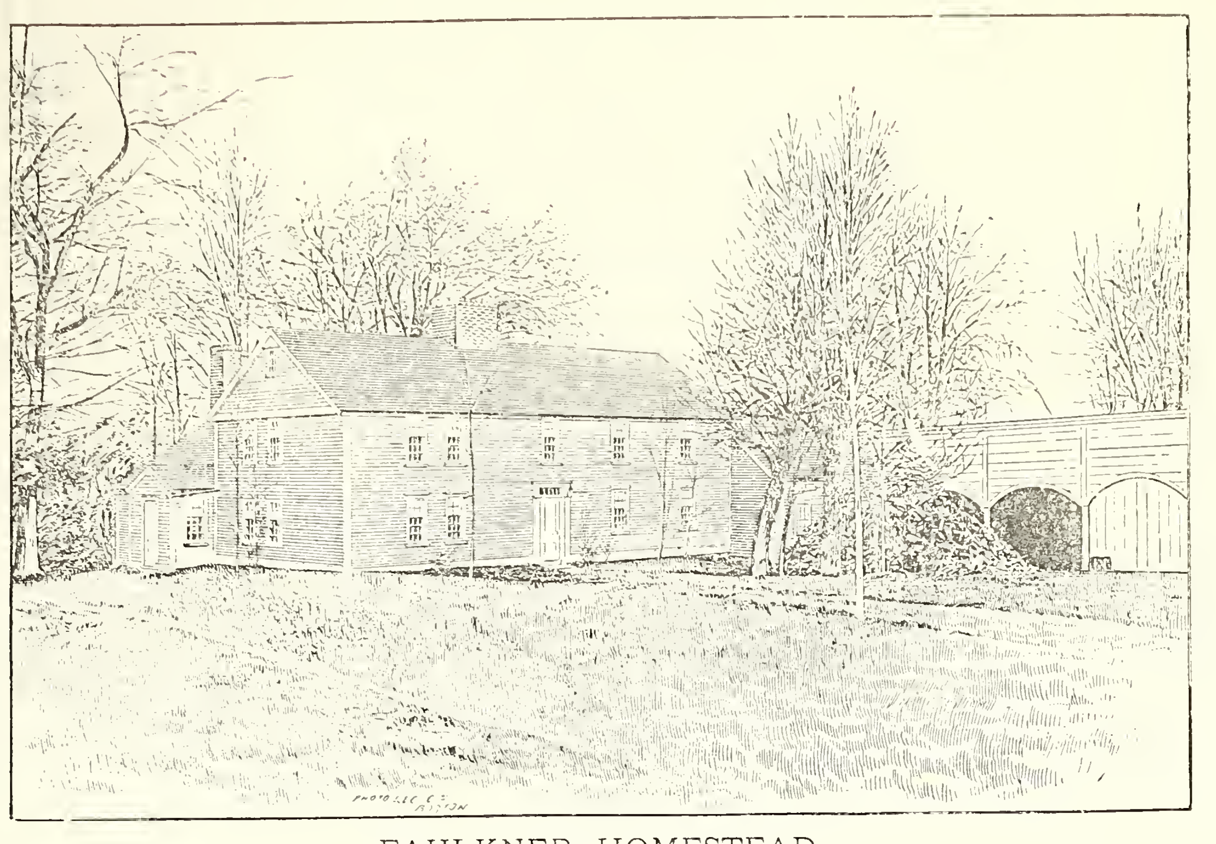
"1st. *Resolved*, that as this State is at present destitute of an established form of Government, it is necessary one should be immediately formed and established.

"2. *Resolved*, That the Supreme Legislature in that capacity are by no means a body proper to form and establish a constitution for the following reasons, viz.:

"Because a constitution properly formed has a system of principles established to secure subjects in the possession of their rights and privileges against any encroachments of the Legislative part, and it is our opinion that the same body which has a right to form a constitution has a right to alter it, and we conceive a constitution alterable by the Supreme Legislative power is no security to the subjects against the encroachments of that power on our rights and privileges.

"*Resolved*, that the town thinks it expedient that a convention be chosen by the inhabitants of the several towns and districts in this State being free to form and establish a constitution for the State.

"*Resolved*, That the Honorable Assembly of this State be desired to recommend to the Inhabitants of the State to choose a convention for the above purpose as soon as possible.



FAULKNER HOMESTEAD.

"*Resolved*, that the Convention publish their proposed constitution before they establish it for the inspection and remarks of the Inhabitants of this state."

At a meeting in February, 1778. "the United States Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union," after being twice read, were accepted by the town.

In May, 1778, a Constitution and frame of government for the State, which had been formed by the General Court, was laid before the town for consideration, and was rejected by a vote of fifty-one to eighteen.

The instrument was so offensive to the inhabitants that in May, 1779, an article being inserted in the warrant, "to see if the town will choose at this time to have a new Constitution or frame of government," the constitution was rejected.

The proposition, however, though rejected by this town, was accepted by a majority of the people, and in July, 1779, Francis Faulkner was chosen a delegate to sit in a convention in Cambridge to form a Constitution, and the result was that the present Constitution of this Commonwealth was laid before the town for *consideration* on the 28th day of April, 1780, and it being *read*, the meeting was adjourned for consideration till the 15th of May.

On that the articles were *debated*, and at a further adjournment on the 29th of the same month every article was *approved* by a majority of more than two-thirds of the voters. These simple records show heroic grit, combined statesmanship and patriotism worthy of those olden dates and worthy of any dates since or of any that are to follow.

The Faulkner House (South Acton).—This is the oldest house now standing in Acton. You go from the railroad station south across the bridge and ascend the steep hill, and you at once approach the ancient structure. It has on its face and surroundings an impress of age, which strikes the eye at first glance, and the impress deepens as the eye tarries for a second look.

Colonel Winthrop E. Faulkner, who died March 25, 1880, aged seventy-five years, used to say that they told him when a child it must have been 150 years old then. No tongue and no records fix the original date of this ancient landmark. It is safe to call it 200 years old, some parts of it at least.

It was a block-house, and in the early Colonial times it was a garrison-house where the settlers in the neighborhood would gather in the night for protection against the assaults of the Indians.

Enter the southwest room. It will easily accommodate 100 persons. It is a square room neatly kept and furnished with antique mementos. Raise your hand and you easily touch the projecting beams of dry hard oak, which the sharpest steel cannot cleave, eighteen inches solid. The space between the beams of the sides of the room are filled with brick, which make it fire-proof against the shot of the enemy.

You notice the two small glass windows as large as an orange in the entering door of this room. They were for use in watching the proceeding of the courts which once were held here by Francis Faulkner, the justice.

Measure the old chimney, nine feet by seven, solid brick furnished with three large fire-places and an oven below and an oven above in the attic for smoking hams, large enough to accommodate all the neighbors and hooks attached in the arch where the hams could remain suspended till called for.

Mark that fine photograph on the wall. It is the life-like face of Colonel Winthrop E. Faulkner. Give him a royal greeting, for he was the life of the village and town in childhood's days and in later years, and there comes his aged widow, still living and gracing the old homestead and guarding the precious relics, now in her eighty-third year.

Mrs. Lottie Flagg, her daughter, the veteran and successful school-teacher, who does a noble work in helping the outfit and hospitality of this historic site. Note her words as she repeats the tale of this rallying centre on the morning of the 19th of April, 1775.

Francis Faulkner, Jr., a boy of fifteen years, was lying awake early in the morning, no one yet moving and listening to the clatter of a horse's feet drawing nearer and nearer. Suddenly he leaped from his bed, ran into his father's room and cried out, "Father, there's a horse coming on the full run and he's bringing news." His father, Colonel Francis, already had on his pantaloons and his gun in his hand. The fleet horseman wheeled across the bridge and up to the house, and shouted, "Rouse your minute-men, Mr. Faulkner! The British are marching on Lexington and Concord," and away he went to spread the news.

Mr. Faulkner, without stopping to dress, fired three times as fast as he could load and fire—that being the preconcerted signal to call out the minute men.

"And so, through the night, went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm;
A cry of defiance, and not of fear;
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo forever more."

Being the chairman of safety and colonel of the Middlesex Regiment of Militia—the men were to assemble at his house. Almost immediately a neighbor repeated the signal and the boy Francis listened with breathless interest to hear the signal guns grow fainter and fainter off in the distant farm-houses. Signal-fires were also lighted, and every house awoke from its slumbers to the new era. By this time the family were all up in the greatest commotion—the younger children crying because the British would come and kill them. Very soon the minute-men began to come in, every one with his gun, powder-horn, pouch of bullets and a piece of bread and cheese, the only breakfast he proposed to make before meeting the enemy of his country. Some came hurrying in with their wives and children in the greatest excitement, to get more certain news and to know what was to be

done. Word came from Captain Davis that he would march as soon as thirty should come in. In the mean time they were busy in driving down stakes on the lawn and hanging kettles for cooking the soldiers' dinners. They brought from the houses beef and pork, patatoes and cabbages. The women would cook the dinner, and some of the elder boys, of whom Francis, Jr., was one, were designated to bring it along packed in saddle-bags. By the time these preliminaries for dinner were made Lieutenant Hunt took command of the West Militia Company, Capt. Faulkner having a few days before been promoted to the position of colonel of the Middlesex Regiment.

The line was formed on the lawn south of the house, and they marched amid the tears of their families. Colonel Faulkner accompanied them to take command of the Middlesex Regiment, as the other companies would come in at Concord. Uncle Francis, the boy, waited with great impatience for the dinner to be cooked and packed. Every woman wanted to prepare the dinner complete and separate for her husband or sons. But after much discussion it was agreed to pack all the beef and pork, bread and vegetables, each kind by itself, and let the men themselves divide it. At length, after some hours of talking and boiling and packing, the horses were loaded, and the boys started off.

I asked Uncle Francis why in the world they did not take a wagon, and one horse would be enough for the whole. Didn't they know enough to do that? "Oh, yes—they knew too much to do that," he said. The British soldiers might have the road. If we saw a red-coat we were told to give him a wide birth, or he might get us and our dinner. We could quietly topple over a stone wall or take out a few rails and escape through the fields and find our men wherever they might be. To the great surprise of the boy he found the Acton men in the highest spirits. They had made the red-coats run for their lives.

This house is so associated with the history of the Faulkner family, and this family is so blended with the history of the town, that a brief family record is here appended.

Francis Faulkner, the father of Ammiruhammah, and the grandfather of Col. Francis Faulkner, was a resident of Andover, Mass., and married Abigail Dane, daughter of Rev. Francis Dane, the second minister of Andover, a woman of noble character and exemplary piety. She was accused of witchcraft, tried and condemned to death. She passed through the terrible ordeal with unshaken firmness, and the sentence was revoked.

Ammiruhammah Faulkner, son of Francis, came from Andover and settled in "Concord Village," in 1735, at the "great falls." of the "Great Brook," where he erected the mills which have since been owned and occupied by his descendants, where he died Aug. 4. 1756, aged sixty-four.

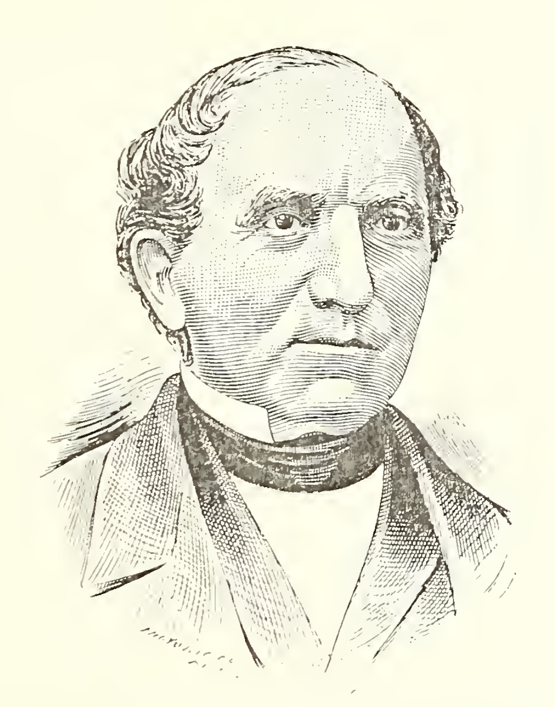
Col. Francis Faulkner, son of Ammiruhammah, was born in Andover, Mass., Sept. 29, 1728, and died in Acton Aug. 5, 1805, aged seventy-seven. He married Lizzie Mussey April 29, 1756. He was a member of the Provincial Congress held in Concord, 1774, and represented the town of Acton in the Legislature of 1783–4–5. He had a military commission under George III., but the oppressive and arbitrary acts of Great Britain induced him to renounce his allegiance to the crown. In 1775 he was elected major of a regiment organized to "oppose invasion."

On the morning of the 19th of April, 1775, he marched with the Acton patriots to the Concord North Bridge, where he engaged the British, and with his men pursued them to Charlestown. He was several times engaged in actual service during the war, being lieutenant-colonel in the Regiment Middlesex Militia called to reinforce the Continental Army at the occupation of Dorchester Heights, in March, 1776. He was in service when Burgoyne was taken, and commanded the regiment which guarded the prisoners on that occasion. He was a courageous officer, an able legislator and an exemplary Christian. He built the mills which for a century and a half have been known as the Faulkner Mills, now of South Acton. They were first only a saw and a grist-mill, the two most indispensable agents of civilization and comfort in a new country. To these was added in due time a fulling-mill, which was among the very earliest efforts at the manufacture of woolen cloth in this country.

There was first a carding-machine, which changed as by magic the wool into beautiful rolls. They were distributed to many houses to be spun and woven into rough woolen cloth and returned to the mill. Here the cloth was fulled under stampers with soap, which made it foam and helped cleanse and thicken it up. The process of raising nap with teazles was exceedingly interesting. The teazle was a product of nature and seemed expressly and wonderfully created for that very purpose. Then came the shearing off inequalities by the swift revolving shears and the final finishing up into cloth. When the wool was of fine quality and evenly spun the result was a passable broadcloth of great durability.

In order to encourage wool production and skill in using it, prizes were offered for the finest specimen of home-made broadcloth—that is, the wool, the spinning and weaving were of home; the rest was of the fulling-mill. This spinning and weaving were the fine arts of our grandmothers and great-grandmothers, and noble women were proud of the prizes they won. A prize to a spinster was sure to attract the most flattering attention and take her speedily out of spinsterhood.

Colonel Faulkner was not only an active, energetic "clothier," but also a leading citizen in all public interests. For thirty-five successive years he was chosen town clerk, and the records are kept with neatness, clearness and order. (See Cyrus Hamlin's



COL. WINTHROP E. FAULKNER.

Historical Sketch, read before Historical Society at Lexington.)

Winthrop Faulkner, the son of Francis, was born in Acton March 21, 1774, and died in Acton March 17, 1813. He received a justice's commission at the age of twenty-three. He was a man of cultivated mind and sound judgment, and his advice was generally sought for all important town matters. He was one of the original members of the Corinthian Lodge of Masons in Concord.

COLONEL WINTHOP E. FAULKNER.—He was the son of Winthrop Faulkner, born April 16, 1805, and died March 25, 1880. He was initiated into the Corinthian Lodge of Masons in 1854. He married Martha Adams Bixby, of Framingham. He was noted in all the relations of life. He was an enterprising miller, an enthusiast in music, dancing, military, civil, social and parish activities. He was a pushing man, forward in all enterprises for the public improvement. He was one of the prime movers in projecting the Fitchburg Railroad, and but for his enterprise in controlling the first plans, the road would have gone in another direction. He was for a long run of years one of the most active directors.

THE ROBBINS HOUSE. — Returning from the Fletcher homestead to the main road, and proceeding direct by the cemetery and beyond till we reach nearly the brow of the hill on the left, we come to the site of what was for so many years called the Robbins House. The land on which it was located was purchased of Captain Thomas Wheeler, whose house (the first in Acton) was located a few rods to the south, near the little brook before described in this narrative. When the latter house was taken down the timbers were found to be in good condition, and were used in the construction of the L part of Nathan Robbins' house.

It was an historic structure from the start, and was emphatically so after the 19th of April, 1775. "Before light on that eventful morning, hours before the British entered Concord, a horseman, whose name was never known, going at full speed (they spared neither horseflesh nor manflesh in those days), rode up to this house, then occupied by Captain Joseph Robbins, the commissioned officer in the town of Acton, who lived nearest North Bridge, and struck with a large, heavy club, as they thought, the corner of the house, never dismounting, but crying out at the top of his voice, 'Capt. Robbins! Capt. Robbins! up, up! The Regulars have come to Concord. Rendezvous at old North Bridge! quick as possible alarm Acton.'"

His only son—afterwards a venerable magistrate—John Robbins, Esq., was then asleep in the garret—a lad ten years old.

But "those rappings"—and there was no sham about them—and that cry brought him to his feet *instanter* and every other living man in that house. It waked the babe in the cradle. In a few minutes he was on "father's old mare," bound for Captain Davis's, not a mile off, who commanded the minute-men, and then to Deacon Simon Hunt's, in the west part of the town, who commanded the West Company as first lieutenant, Captain Francis Faulkner having, a few days before, been promoted to be major, and the vacancy not having been filled.

"The hurrying footsteps of that steed
The fate of a nation was riding that night."

The locality where this house stood is easily recognized from the indications on the ground. It was a two-story building. The barn was struck by lightning in the year 1830, and was rapidly consumed. The citizens rallied to save the building, or at least part of it, but Esq. Robbins shouted out with his stentorian voice: "Boys, save your fingers. There is plenty of timber in the woods where this came from!" He knew how to shout, for he was often moderator of the Acton town-meetings, which gave him a good chance to drill in that line of practice. The house stood afterwards for years unoccupied, but at last it yielded to the destiny of flames, supposed to have been an accidental fire, from the carelessness of transient occupants. The old door-stone still remains in position, battered somewhat by relic-hunters, who have chipped from it for the sake of a memento. A tablet memorial will some day be erected on this ground befitting its historic interest.

The report of this house having been haunted in former years is easily credited by the superstitious, but denied by the more phlegmatic crowd. That those April rappings should have reverberations long continued is credible, and any one going by of an imaginative and appreciative turn of mind can hear them still ringing in his ears.

CAPTAIN DAVIS' ROUTE TO THE NORTH BRIDGE.—The 19th of April, 1775. It was a bright, genial morning. The sun was up at a good, cheery height of an hour and a half. The birds were chanting the very best songs of the opening spring. The men were drawn up in line. The captain at last gave the word "march." Luther Blanchard, the fifer, and Francis Barker, the drummer, struck at once the stirring notes of the "White Cockade," and forward they moved with a quick, brave step. They soon reached the homestead of Parson Swift. They could not stop for the greetings or the partings of the good man, but on they pressed, with their faces set for Mother Concord. They moved along over the old and only road leading from the present site of Deacon W. W. Davis' crossing in a straight line through to the meeting-house on the "knowll."

The road struck the other road just below Dr. Cowdry's barn, where now stands Deacon John Fletcher's barn, just relocated by Moses Taylor, Esq. The old road-bed was found when recently digging the cellar for the barn.

They could not stop for the silent benedictions of the old church, but the prayers and blessings of the

pastor they could hear, and march all the faster for the memory. The handkerchiefs waving from the Brooks Tavern doors and windows helped the thrill of the hour. Down the hills they moved by the present site of Mr. McCarthy, up the ascent to the right, over the heights on the road path, now closed, but still a favorite walk down the hill, across the Revolutionary Bridge, west of Horace Hosmer's present site, the road leading by the spot where the elms south of his house now stand.

This bridge stood very near the spot where the railroad bridge now stands. Some of the stone which formed the abutments of the old bridge were used in the construction of the railroad bridge. The bridge, a few rods to the south of the original, has been sketched by Arthur F. Davis, Acton's young artist, and it is a favorite landscape etching on sale in the cities.

Up the hill they hasten and turn to the right, going by Mr. Hammond Taylor's present residence, the old Brabrook homestead, on the south side, which was then the front side, the road on the north being a comparatively new opening; there they left the main road, struck through the woods, taking a bee-line to their destined point. After passing the woods, the march is by the Nathan Brooks place, now owned and occupied by Mr. H. F. Davis. The passage then was by the nearest way to Barrett's Mills, as then called, not far from the North Bridge.

LUTHER BLANCHARD.—He was born within the limits of what is now Boxboro', a part of Littleton at the time of the Concord Fight. He was a favorite young man, tall, straight, handsome and athletic. He was living at the time with Abner Hosmer, a mason, whose residence was the site of Mr. Herman A. Gould, on the South Acton road, from the West, making him a near neighbor to Captain Davis. He was learning the mason's trade. He was a notable fifer, and his skill and zeal on the morning of the 19th had much to do with the spirit of the whole occasion. The scene was just adapted to wake the musical genius to its highest pitch, and if there were any white feathers around they soon changed to fiery red at the signal from Luther's fife. When they began firing at the bridge, the British at first used blank cartridges. Captain Davis inquired if they were firing bullets. Luther said "Yes," for one had hit him and he was wounded. "If it had gone an inch further one way it would have killed me, and if an inch in the opposite direction it would have not have hit me at all." He followed on in the pursuit of the British on their retreat to Boston, fifing with all the vigor of his manly strength, which grew less as the excitement of the day began to tell upon his wasted forces. The wound, which he did not think serious at first, grew worse as he proceeded, and on reaching Cambridge he was obliged to be taken to a hospital, where he died.

Mrs. Jonathan B. Davis, a daughter of Simon Hosmer, often told these facts to Mr. Luke Blanchard, now living. It was the statement of Mr. Luke Blanchard's father, who was always careful in what he affirmed, that Luther died from the effects of his wound. Luther Blanchard's brother Calvin died from the fall of a tree. He helped tear down barns to build the fort on Bunker Hill. He would carry one end of the timber while it would take two men at the other end to balance.

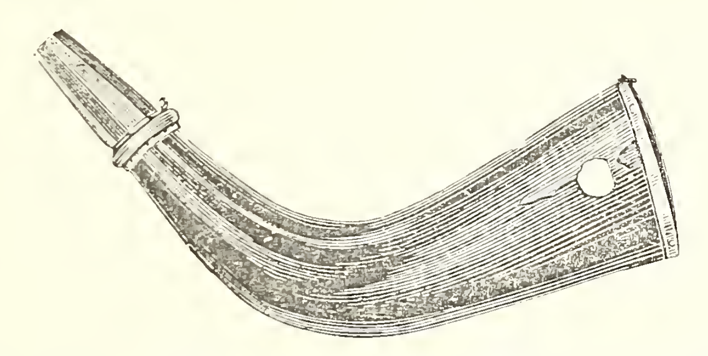
Luther and Calvin Blanchard's father was in the fight at Quebec, and lost his life on the Plains of Abraham. There must have been patriotic gunpowder in the very blood of the Blanchards at the original start.

Aaron Jones was near Captain Davis when he fell, and followed in pursuit of the British on their retreat. He never could forget that morning or speak of it without a changed tone and face. He thought much of Luther Blanchard as an associate on that eventful day, and of his fifing march. He named one of his sons Luther Blanchard in memory of the martyr fifer. As the first blood shed on the 19th at Concord antedated the fall of Davis, in the person of Luther Blanchard, there ought to be a tablet, somewhere, memorizing the fact.

THE JAMES HAYWARD HOUSE.—The house in West Acton, formerly the residence of Hon. Stevens Hayward and in later years known as the Leland Place, now occupied by Mr. Kraetzer. Mr. Woodbury, in his legislative speech, thus relates the circumstances of James Hayward's fall on the 19th of April, 1775:

"At Fiske's Hill, in Lexington, they had, as some, thought, the severest encounter of all the way. The road ran around the eastern base of a steep, thick-wooded hill. James Hayward, who had been active and foremost all the way, after the British had passed on, came down from the hill and was aiming for a well of water—the same well is still to be seen at the two-story Dutch-roofed red house on the right from Concord to Lexington, not two miles from the old meeting-house. As he passed by the end of that house he spied a British soldier, still lingering behind the main body, plundering. The Briton also saw him and ran to the front door to cut him off. Lifting up his loaded musket he exclaims, 'You are a dead man.' Hayward immediately said, 'So are you.' They both fired and both fell. The Briton was shot dead, Hayward mortally wounded, the ball entering his side through this hole," holding up the powder-horn, "driving the splinters into his body. He lived eight hours; retained his reason to the last.

"His venerable father, Deacon Samuel Hayward, whose house he had left that morning in the bloom of vigorous manhood, had time to reach Lexington and comfort him with his conversation by reading the Scriptures and prayer. 'James, you are mortally wounded. You can live but a few hours. Before sunrise to-morrow you will no doubt be a corpse.



POWDER HORN WORN BY JAMES HAYWARD,

AT LEXINGTON, AND THROUGH WHICH HE WAS SHOT AND KILLED, APRIL 19, 1775.

The town of Lexington has recently erected a Tablet with the following inscription:

At this well, April 19, 1775, James Hayward, of Acton, met a British soldier who, raising his gun, said, "You are a dead man." "And so are you," replied Hayward. Both fired, the soldier was instantly killed, and Hayward mortally wounded.

Are you sorry that you turned out?' 'Father, hand me my powder-horn and bullet-pouch. I started with one pound of powder and forty balls, you see what is left,'—he had used all but two or three of them,—'you see what I have been about. I never did such a forenoon's work before. I am not sorry. Tell mother not to mourn too much for me, *for I am not sorry I turned out*. I die willingly for my country. She will now, I doubt not, by help of God, be free. And tell her whom I loved better than my mother—you know whom I mean—that I am not sorry. I never shall see her again. May I meet her in heaven.'

"Hayward had lost, by the cut of an axe, part of his toes on one foot, and was not liable to military duty. He 'turned out' that morning as a volunteer in the strictest sense—as hundreds did. He was one of the earliest at Davis' house, belonged to the same school district and born and bred by the side of him, their fathers being next-door neighbors. He was twenty-eight years old, one of the most athletic, fine-looking, well-informed, well-bred young men in town. He had been a schoolmaster, he knew the crisis, he knew what he was fighting for and what was to be gained. He came early to Davis' house and acted with his company. He was seen to go to grinding on the grindstone the point of his bayonet there. On being asked why he did it, 'Because,' said he, 'I expect, before night, we shall come to a push with them and I want my bayonet *sharp*.'"

A fine stone tablet has been erected by the town of Lexington opposite the house where Hayward fell, in honor of the man and the event.

Abner Hosmer House.—Abner Hosmer, a private in Davis' company of minute-men; only twenty-two years old; unmarried; the son of Dea. Jonathan Hosmer, of the Acton Church. A friend and neighbor of Davis fell dead at the same volley—shot through the head. He lived where Mr. Gould now lives, half-way between South and West Villages, nearly a mile from either.

Mrs. Mehitable Piper (Acton's centenarian).—She was the daughter of Joseph Barker (2d) and wife of Silas Piper; born Jan. 24, 1771. She died March 25, 1872, at the age of 101 years and two months. Her funeral took place at her residence on the 28th. The house was filled with relatives and friends. After prayer and touching words of consolation a solemn funeral procession followed the remains to the church at the Centre. The house was filled in every part. Rev. Mr. Hayward, Universalist, and Rev. F. P. Wood, Orthodox, officiated.

Her existence was contemporaneous with that of the nation itself. She saw her mother weep in her father's embrace when he tore himself from the bosom of his family to take the part of a patriot in the Concord fight. She was living at the time where Moses Taylor, Esq., now lives, and went up to the top of Raspberry Hill, back of Rev. F. P. Wood's present residence, to see or hear something from Concord. She had seen every phase of her country's wonderful growth, and to perpetuate and promote it had sent her descendants into the War of 1812 and through the streets of Baltimore to the terrible War of the Rebellion.

She was the last of the devoted band of Puritans who had worshiped God in the town at the time when religious differences were unknown. She was the relic of other days and the wept of many hearts. Though older than the nation, she did not live long enough to make a single enemy, and her friends were those who at any time had known or seen her. She was buried in Woodlawn Cemetery by the side of her partner.

Some of her ancestors were remarkable for their longevity, her father being upwards of ninety-nine years of age at his death.

She lived eighty years in one spot. She had twelve children, forty-two grandchildren, seventy great-grandchildren, and two children of the fifth generation. Her father stood beside Captain Davis after he fell, and exclaimed to his comrades, "*Boys, don't give up!*"

Rev. J. T. Woodbury's Speech.—Who was Captain Isaac Davis? Who was Abner Hosmer? Who was James Hayward? And what was Concord fight? What did they fight for, and what did they win? These were Massachusetts Province militiamen; not in these good, quiet, piping times of peace, but in 1775, at the very dark, gloomy outbreak of the American Revolution.

Let us turn back to the bloody annals of that eventful day. Let us see, as well as we can at this distance of three-quarters of a century, just how matters and things stood.

General Gage had full possession of this city. The flag that waved over it was not that of "the old pine-tree"; nor that one, with that beautiful insignia, over your head, sir—with the uplifted right hand lettered over with this most warlike and, to my taste, most appropriate motto in a wrongful world like this, "*Ense petit placidam, sub libertate quietem.*" No, no! It was the flag of that hereditary despot, George the Third!

And if there had been no Isaac Davis or other men of his stamp on the ground in that day, the flag of the crouching lion, the flag of Queen Victoria—due successor to that same hated George the Third; first the oppressor, and then the unscrupulous murderer of our fathers! Yes; I know what I say—the unscrupulous murderer of our fathers—would still wave over this beautiful city and would now be streaming in the wind over every American ship in this harbor. Where, in that case, would have been this Legislature? Why, sir, it would never have been; and my conscientious friend from West Brookfield, instead of sitting here a good "Free Soil" man, as he is, would have been called to no such high vocation as making

laws for a free people—for the good old Commonwealth of Massachusetts; voting for Robert Rantoul, Jr., or Charles Sumner, or Hon. Mr. Winthrop to represent us in a body known as the United States Senate, pronounced the most august, dignified legislative assembly in the civilized world. Oh, no! Far otherwise! If permitted to legislate at all, it would be done under the dictation of Queen Victoria; and if he made laws it would be with a ring in his nose to pull him this way and that, or with his head in the British Lion's mouth—that same lion's mouth which roared in 1775—showing his teeth and lashing his sides at our fathers.

This city was in full possession of the enemy, and had been for several months. Gen. Gage had converted that house of prayer, the Old South Church—where we met a few days since, to sit, delighted auditors, to that unsurpassed election sermon—into a riding-school, a drilling-place for his cavalry. The pulpit and all the pews of the lower floor were, with vandal violence, torn out and tan brought in; and here the dragoons of King George practiced, on their prancing war-horses, the sword exercises, with Tory ladies and gentlemen for spectators in the galleries.

At the 19th of April, 1775, it was not "*Ense petit placidam, sub libertate quietem.*" "*Sub libertate!*" It would have been, rather, "*Sub vili servitio*"—sub anything—rather than liberty under the British Crown!

Information had been received from most reliable sources that valuable powder, ball and other munitions of war were deposited in Concord. Gen. Gage determined to have them. Concord was a great place in '75. The Provincial Congress had just suspended its session there of near two months, adjourning over to the 10th of May, with Warren for their president, and such men as old Samuel Adams, John Hancock, John Adams and James Otis as their advisers. Yes, Concord was the centre of the brave old Middlesex, containing within it all the early battle-grounds of liberty—Old North Bridge, Lexington Common and Bunker Hill—and was for a time the capital of the Province, the seat of the Government of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay.

And Concord had within it as true-hearted Whig patriots as ever breathed. Rev. Mr. Emerson was called a "high son of liberty." To contend with tyrants and stand up against them, resisting unto blood, fighting for the inalienable rights of the people, was a part of his holy religion. And he was one of the most godly men and eloquent ministers in the Colony. He actually felt it to be his duty to God to quit that most delightful town and village, and that most affectionate church and people, and enter the Continental army and serve them as chaplain of a regiment.

What a patient, noble-hearted, truthful, loyal, confiding, affectionate generation of men they were. And remember, these were the men, exasperated beyond all further endurance by the course of a deluded Parliament and besotted ministry, who flew to arms on the 19th of April, 1775. These were the men who then hunted up their powder-horns and bullet-pouches, took down their guns from the hooks, and ground up their bayonets, on that most memorable of all days in the annals of the old thirteen Colonies—nay, in the annals of the world—which record the struggles that noble men have made in all ages to be free!

Yes, to my mind, Mr. Speaker, it is a more glorious day, a day more full of thrilling incidents and great steps taken by the people to be free than even the 4th of July, itself, 1776.

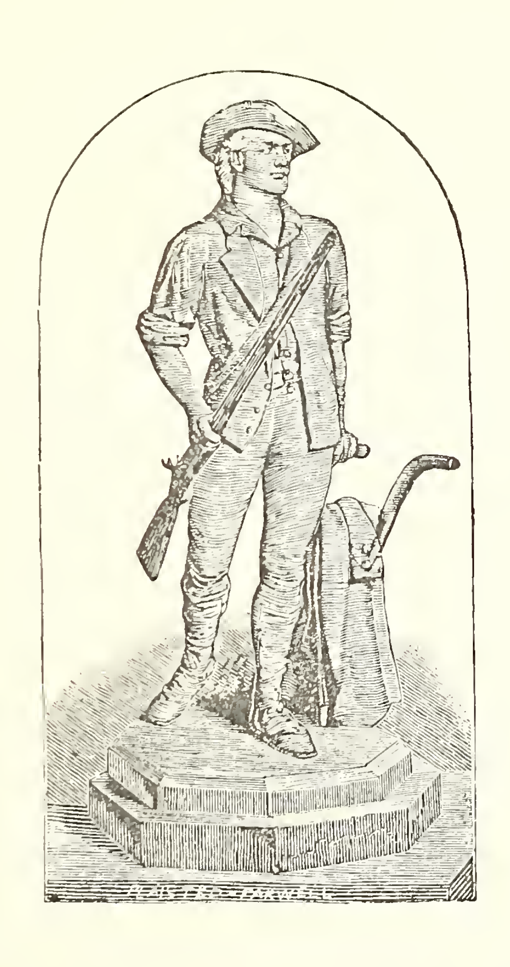
Why, sir, the 19th of April, '75, that resistance, open, unorganized, armed, marshaled resistance at the old North Bridge—that marching down in battle array, at that soul-stirring air, which every soldier in this house must remember to this day, for the tune is in fashion yet—I mean "the White Cockade"—was itself a prior declaration of independence, written out not with ink upon paper or parchment, but a declaration of independence made by drawn swords, uplifted right arms; fixed bayonets ground sharp, cracking musketry, a declaration written out in the best blood of this land, at Lexington first, and finally all the way for eighteen miles from Old North Bridge to Charlestown Neck, where these panting fugitives found shelter under the guns of British ships of war riding at anchor in Mystic River ready to receive them; a declaration that put more at hazard, and cost the men who made it more, after all, of blood and treasure, than that of 1776.

It cost Davis, Hosmer and Hayward and hundreds of others, equally brave and worthy, their hearts' blood. It cost many an aged father and mother their darling son, many a wife her husband, many a Middlesex maid her lover.

Oh, what a glorious, but oh, what a bloody day it was! That was the day which split in twain the British empire never again to be united. What was the battle of Waterloo? What question did it settle? Why, simply who, of several kings, should wear the crown. Well, I always thought, ever since I read it, when a boy, that if I had fought on either side it would have been with Napoleon against the allied forces. But what is the question to me, or what is the question to you, or to any of us, or our children after us, if we are to be ruled over by crowned heads and hereditary monarchs? What matters it who they are, or which one it shall be?

In ancient times three hundred Greeks, under Leonidas, stood in the pass of Thermopylæ and for three successive days beat back and kept at bay five million Persians, led on by Xerxes, the Great. It was a gallant act, but did it preserve the blood-bought liberties of Greece? No. In time they were cloven down, and the land of Demosthenes and Solon marked for ages by the footsteps of the slave.

We weep over it, but we cannot alter it. But not so, thank God! with "Concord fight," and by "Con-



THE BRONZE STATUE WHICH STANDS UPON THE SPOT WHERE
CAPT. ISAAC DAVIS AND PRIVATE ABNER HOSMER
FELL IN THE CONCORD FIGHT.

cord fight," I say here, for fear of being misunderstood, I mean by "Concord" all the transactions of that day.

I regard them as one great drama, scene first of which was at Lexington early in the morning, when old Mrs. Harrington called up her son Jonathan, who alone, while I speak, survives of all that host on either side in arms that day. He lives, blessed be God, he still lives; I know him well, a trembling, but still breathing memento of the renowned past; yet lingering by mercy of God on these "mortal shores," if for nothing else, to wake up your sleeping sympathies and induce you, if anything could, to aid in the noble work of building over the bones of his slaughtered companions-in-arms, Davis, Hosmer and Hayward, such a monument as they deserve. Oh, I wish he was here. I wish he only stood on yonder platform, noble man!

"Concord fight" broke the ice. "Concord fight," the rush from the heights at North Bridge was the first open marshaled resistance to the King. Our fathers, cautious men, took there a step that they could not take back if they would, and would not if they could. Till they made that attack probably no British blood had been shed.

If rebels at all, it was only on paper. They had not levied war. They had not *vi et armis* attacked their lawful king. But by that act they passed the Rubicon; till then they *might* retreat with honor; but after that it was too late. The sword was drawn and had been made red in the blood of princes, in the person of their armed defenders.

Attacking Captain Laurie and his detachment at North Bridge was, in law, attacking King George himself. Now they *must* fight or be eternally disgraced. And now they did fight in good earnest. They drew the sword and threw away, as well they might, the scabbard. Yesterday they humbly petitioned. They petitioned no longer. Oh, what a change from the 19th to the 20th of April. They had been, up to that day, a grave, God-fearing, loyal, set of men, honoring the king. Now they strike for national independence and after a seven-years' war, by the help of God, they won it. They obtained nationality. It that day breathed into life; the Colony gave way to the State; that morning Davis and all of them were British colonists. They became by that day's resistance either rebels doomed to die by the halter, or free, independent citizens. If the old Pine Tree flag still waved over them unchanged, they themselves were changed too, entirely and forever.

Old Middlesex was allowed the privilege of opening this war; of first baptizing the land with her blood. God did well to select old Middlesex, and the loved and revered centre of old Middlesex, namely, Concord, as the spot not where this achievement was to be completed, but where it was to be begun, and well begun; where the troops of crowned kings were to meet, not the troops of the people, but the people themselves, and be routed and beaten from the field, and what is more, stay beaten we hope, we doubt not to the end of time.

And let us remember that our fathers, from the first to the last in that eventful struggle, made most devout appeals to Almighty God. It was so with the whole Revolutionary War. It was all begun, continued and ended in God. Every man and every boy that went from the little mountain town of Acton with its five hundred souls, went that morning from a house of prayer. A more prayerful, pious, God-fearing, man-loving people, I have never read or heard of; if you have, sir, I should like to know who they are, and where they live. They were Puritans, Plymouth Rock Puritans, men who would petition and petition and petition, most respectfully and most courteously, and when their petition and petitioners, old Ben. Franklin and the rest, were proudly spurned away from the foot of the throne, petition again; and do it again for more than ten long, tedious, years; but after all they would fight and fight as never man fought, and they did so fight.

When such men take up arms let kings and queens take care of themselves. When you have waked up such men to resistance unto blood you have waked up a lion in his den. You may kill them. They are vulnerable besides on the heel, but, my word for it, you never can conquer them.

At old North Bridge, about nine o'clock in the forenoon, on the memorable 19th of April, 1775, King George's troops met these men and after receiving their first fire fled, and the flight still continues—the flight of kings before the people.

Davis' minute-men were ready first and were on the ground first. They were an *élite* corps, young men, volunteers, and give me young men for war. They must be ready at a moment's warning. They were soon at Davis' house and gun-shop. Here they waited till about fifty had arrived. While there some of them were powdering their hair just as the Greeks were accustomed to put garlands of flowers on their heads as they went forth to battle, and they expected a battle. They were fixing their gun-locks and making a few cartridges, but cartridges and cartridge-boxes were rare in those days. The accoutrements of the heroes of the Revolution were the powder-horn and the bullet-pouch, at least of the militia.

And Concord fight, with all its unequaled and uneclipsed glory was won, by help of God, by Massachusetts militiamen. Some were laughing and joking to think that they were going to have what they had for months longed for, a "hit at old Gage." But Davis was a thoughtful, sedate, serious man, a genuine Puritan like Samuel Adams, and he rebuked them. He told them that in his opinion it was "a most eventful crisis for the colonies; blood would be spilt, that was certain; the crimsoned fountain would be opened, none could tell when it would close, nor with whose blood it would overflow. Let every man gird himself

for battle, and not be afraid, for God is on our side. He had great hopes that the country would be free, though he might not live to see it." The truth was, and it should come out.

Davis expected to die that day if he went into battle. He never expected to come back alive to that house.

And no wonder that after the company started and had marched out of his lane some twenty rods to the highway he halted them and went back. He was an affectionate man. He loved that youthful wife of his and those four sick children, and he thought to see them never again and he never did. There was such a presentiment in his mind. His widow has often told me all about it and she thought the same herself, and no wonder he went back and took one more last lingering look of them, saying—he seemed to want to say something, but as he stood on that threshold where I have often stood and where, in my mind's eye, I have often seen his manly form, he could only say, "Take good care of the children," the feelings of the father struggling in him and for a moment almost overcoming the soldier. The ground of this presentiment was this: A few days before the fight Mr. Davis and wife had been away from home of an afternoon. On returning they noticed, as they entered, a large owl sitting on Davis' gun as it hung on the hooks—his favorite gun—the very gun he carried to the fight—a beautiful piece for those days—his own workmanship—the same he grasped in both hands when he was shot at the bridge, being just about to fire himself and which, when stone dead, he grasped still, his friends having, to get it away, to unclinch his stiff fingers.

Sir, however you may view this occurrence or however I may, it matters not; I am telling how that brave man viewed it and his wife and the men of those times. It was an ill omen—a bad sign. The sober conclusion was that the first time Davis went into battle he would lose his life. This was the conclusion, and so it turned out. The family could give no account of the creature and they knew not how it came in. The hideous bird was not allowed to be disturbed or frightened away, and there he stayed two or three days sitting upon that gun.

But mark: with this distinct impression on his mind did the heart of this Puritan patriarch quail? No; not at all, not at all. He believed in the Puritan's God—the Infinite Spirit sitting on the throne of the Universe, Proprietor of all, Creator and upholder of all, superintending and disposing of all, that the hairs of his head were all numbered and not even a sparrow could fall to the ground without his God's express notice, knowledge and consent. He took that gun from those hooks with no trembling hand or wavering heart, and with his trusty sword hanging by his side he started for North Bridge with the firm tread of a giant. Death! Davis did not fear to die. And he had the magic power, which some men certainly have. God bestows it upon them to inspire every one around them with the same feeling. His soldiers to a man would have gone anywhere after such a leader.

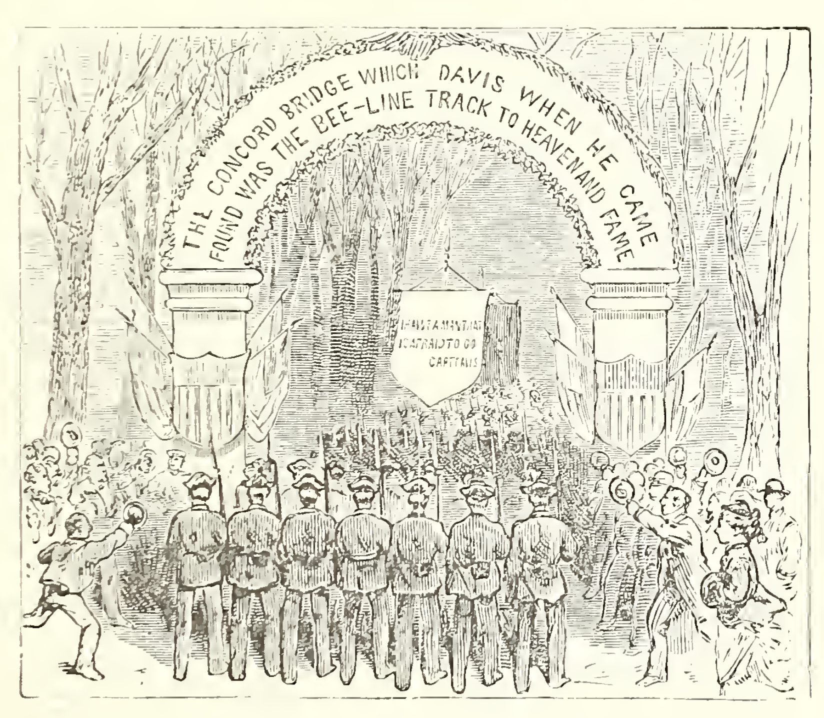
After about two miles of hurried march they came out of the woods only a few rods from Colonel James Barrett's, in Concord, and halted in the highway, whether discovered or not (this road came into the road by Barrett's some twenty rods from Barrett's house), looking with burning indignation to see Captain Parsons and his detachment of British troopers with axes break up the gun-carriages and bring out hay and wood and burn them in the yard.

They had great thoughts of firing in upon them then and there to venture. But Davis was a military man, and his orders were to rendezvous at North Bridge and he knew very well that taking possession of North Bridge would cut off all retreat for this detachment of horse and they must be taken prisoners.

In a few minutes more he wheeled his company into line on the high lands of North Bridge, taking the extreme left of the line—that line being formed facing the river, which was his place, as the youngest commissioned officer present in the regiment—a place occupied a few days before by him at a regimental muster of the minute-men.

A council of war was immediately summoned by Colonel James Barrett and attended on the spot, made up of commissioned officers and Committees of Safety. The question was, What shall now be done? The provincials had been talking for months, nay, for years, of the wrongs they had borne at the hands of a cruel motherland. They had passed good paper resolutions by the dozen. They had fired off their paper-bullets, but what shall *now be done?* Enough had been SAID. What shall now be done? What a moment! What a crisis for the destinies of this land and of all lands, of the rights and liberties of the human race. Never was a council of war or council of peace called to meet a more important question, one on the decision of which more was at stake. Their council was divided. Some thought it best, at once, to rush down and take possession of the bridge and cut off the retreat of Captain Parsons; others thought not.

Here were probably found in battle array over six hundred troops standing there under arms. Colonel Smith and Major Pitcairn were in plain sight, with their red coats on, their cocked-up hats and their spy-glasses inspecting from the old grave-yard hills the gathering foe, for they came in from all directions suddenly, unaccountably, like the gathering of a summer thunder-cloud. Of course it was admitted on all hands that they could take possession of the bridge, but it was to be expected that this skirmish must bring on a general engagement with the main body in the town. The Provincials would be in greater force by twelve o'clock M. than at nine. And if the whole British Army of eight hundred men



THE ACTON MINUTE-MEN.

MARCHING UNDER THE ARCH AT THE OLD NORTH BRIDGE, CONCORD, AT THE CENTENNIAL, APRIL 19, 1875.

should take the field against them in their present number most undoubtedly the men would run—they never would "stand fire." Their officers thought so: their officers said so on the spot. They gave it as their opinion, and it is probable that no attack at that hour would have been made had it not happened that, at that moment, the smoke began to rise from the centre of the town—all in plain sight from these heights—the smoke of burning houses. And they said, Shall we stand here like cowards and see Old Concord burn?

Colonel Barrett gave consent to make the attack. Davis came back to his company, drew his sword and commanded them to advance six paces. He then faced them to the right, and at his favorite tune of "The White Cockade" led the column of attack towards the bridge. By the side of Davis marched Major Buttrick, of Concord, as brave a man as lived, and old Colonel Robinson, of Westford. The British on this began to take up the bridge; the Americans on this quickened their pace. Immediately the firing on both sides began. Davis is at once shot dead through the heart. The ball passed quite through his body, making a very large wound, perhaps driving in a button of his coat. His blood gushed out in one great stream, flying, it is said, more than ten feet, besprinkling and besmearing his own clothes, these shoe-buckles and the clothes of Orderly Sergeant David Forbush and a file leader, Thomas Thorp. Davis, when hit, as is usual with men when shot thus through the heart, leaped up his full length and fell over the causeway on the wet ground, firmly grasping all the while, with both hands, that beautiful gun; and when his weeping comrades came to take care of his youthful but bloody remains, they, with difficulty, unclutched those hands now cold and stiff in death. He was just elevating to his sure eye this gun. No man was a surer shot. What a baptism of blood did those soldiers then receive! The question is now, Do these men deserve this monument? One that shall speak?

Davis' case is without a parallel and was so considered by the Legislature and by Congress when they granted aid to his widow. There never can be another. *There never can be but one man who headed the first column of attack on the King's troops in the Revolutionary War. And Isaac Davis was that man.* Others fell, but not exactly as he fell. Give them the marble. Vote them the monument, one that shall speak to all future generations and speak to the terror of kings and to the encouragement of all who will be free and who, when the bloody crisis comes to strike for it, "are not afraid to go."

The Birth-Place of Captain Isaac Davis.—Captain Isaac Davis was the son of Ezekiel Davis and Mary Gibson, of Stow. He was born February 23, 1745, at the place in West Acton known as the Jonathan B. Davis House, where Mr. George Hagar now lives. He was baptized, June 23, 1745. He married Hannah Brown, of Acton, October 24, 1764. She was born in Acton in 1746. On February 10, 1765, he covenanted with the church.

Captain Isaac Davis' House at the Time of the Concord Fight.—It lies about eighty rods southwest from the present site of Deacon W. W. Davis, at Acton Centre. We pass through the lane from Deacon Davis', still traveled as a private way, but at that time the old road; then go through the pastures, then strike the avenue leading to the residence of Mr. Charles Wheeler. His present house now stands very nearly where Captain Davis' house stood in 1775.

The two fine elms in front on the opposite side of the road, if permitted to stand, will help the antiquarian to locate the grounds, destined, as the years go by, more than ever to be the centre of Acton's local interest. The house in which he lived, has been replaced by another and that one repaired and enlarged. It was for many years the residence of Nathaniel Greene Brown, from 1812. It was occupied by Joseph Brown many years before 1812. It was known for some time as the Ward Haskell place, who reconstructed the building in later years, a noted carpenter. Elias Chaffin occupied the place in 1812. The original house was two story in front, and the back sloped down to one, the kitchen in the lower part.

An old apple-tree, a few years since, stood seven rods from Mr. Wheeler's house in his present orchard. This was the shooting mark of Captain Davis in his gun practice. The scars made by the bullets had been healed over, and what seemed like burrs covered the body of the tree when cut down. Mr. Wheeler now regrets that the wood of this tree was not at the time made into small memorial blocks, as keepsakes in memory of the noted marksman. Such relics are more in demand now that the days of the newness have passed, and the oldness has come instead.

This site must ever have a historical value, as the house of Davis, on the morning of the 19th of April, 1775, where his company gathered, ready for battle, and where the funeral took place, of the three martyred soldiers, Mr. Swift officiating, and where the yeomanry of this surrounding country met on that epoch day, to join with the widow and the breaved public in solemn rites of burial. The antique flat stepping-stone at the ell door of Mr. Wheeler's house is the same trodden by Captain Davis and family, and consecrated by the remembrances of that funeral occasion.

Captain Isaac Davis' Widow and Family Record and later Residence.—The children of Isaac and Hannah (Brown) Davis were: Isaac, born in 1765, a bachelor. He gave his father's sword to Concord. Another son whose name is not known. Hannah, born in 1768, and married Amos Noyes in 1793. She had a daughter, Harriet, who married Mr. Simon Davis, the father of Harriet and Simon Davis. Amos Noyes was the grandfather of Lucian Ephraim,

born in 1773, settled in Maine. Mary, born in 1774, married Noah Fitch in 1796.

The widow married for *second* husband Mr. Samuel Jones, a man of property, July 30, 1782. She had by Mr. Jones. Samuel and Eliza. Samuel was a lawyer and built the house adjoining the monument house, one story, where he had a law-office.

The building was built upon the stumps of the trees, without a cellar. These old stumps were found years afterwards when digging the cellar. This house was afterwards more recently raised to two stories by Simon Davis.

Samuel also built the house owned and occupied now by Mr. John E. Cutter, and the house now owned and occupied by Rev. F. P. Wood, and where for a time Mr. Jones himself lived.

Elijah married a Mr. Waite, and lived in Groton, Massachusetts, and afterwards moved to Albany, New York. She taught school and was highly educated. She secured on one of her visits to Acton a fine oil portrait of her mother in later life, which was much admired and must be a valuable painting if still preserved as an heirloom.

For her *third* husband she married a Mr. Francis Leighton, of Westford, November 21, 1802. After his decease she lived with her granddaughter, Mrs. Simon Davis (Harriet Noyes) occupying the house now owned by Mr. Lucian Noyes, the grandson of Amos Noyes.

There she was living when Rev. Mr. Woodbury called upon her in company with his brother Levi. When asked by Mr. Levi how she managed to live so long, she replied, "I have always lived on the best I could get."

She was a good-sized woman, well developed, and with marked features. She is well remembered by many still living in Acton.

Mr. Woodbury, in his legislative speech, thus refers to her: "These buckles were given to me by Davis' widow, when ninety years old, under very affecting circumstances. I had rendered her aid, in procuring an annuity of fifty dollars from the Commonwealth, and that being insufficient, two hundred dollars more from the United States. Before these grants she had nearly come to want. The money arrived. We were all delighted at the success almost unexpected, for advocating which before the House of Representatives I am under greater obligations to my eloquent friend on my right (General Caleb Cushing), then a member of the House, than to any other man, and to Honorable Daniel Webster in the United States Senate, for which, with all his recent sins on his head, I must love him as long as I live. He never employed his gigantic mind in a nobler cause."

On receiving the money, "Take your pay, Mr. Woodbury," said the old lady.

"I am fully paid already," I said; "but, if you have any Revolutionary relic of your husband, Captain Davis, if nothing more than a button, I should like it right well. She took her cane and hobbled along to her old chest and drew out these shoe-buckles.

"There," said she, "I have lost everything else that belonged to him. These I had preserved for his children, but if you will accept them they are yours."

Precious relics! seventy-five years ago bathed in the heart's blood of one who, in the name of God and oppressed humanity, headed the column of the first successful attack in modern times of people resisting kings, of ruled against rulers, of oppressed against oppressors. Yes, the very first in these years of the world, but by the grace of God, who has declared himself the God of the oppressed, *not the last!* no, by no means. When I have done with them I will hand them over to my children as worth their weight in gold. By these buckles I would swear my son, as Hamilcar, that noble African prince, swore his son Hannibal, "never to give up to Rome." I say, by these shoe-buckles, would I swear my son *to be faithful* unto death, as Davis was in the cause of human liberty, and the just rights of man. Handle them, sir! handle them! How at the touch of these, patriotism, like electricity, will thrill through your bones:

"And one was safe and asleep in his bed,
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,
Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket ball."

REVOLUTIONARY WAR.—January 20, 1776, Middlesex County was ordered to raise a regiment of 571. Acton's quota was thirteen.

A new organization of militia was made in February, 1776, and Acton was assigned to the Third Regiment, Francis Faulkner, of Acton, being made Lieutenant-colonel. The officers of the Acton company were Simon Hunt, captain; John Heald,[5] Jr., first lieutenant; Benjamin Brabrook, second lieutenant. A regiment raised in September, 1776, commanded by Eleazer Brooks, of Lincoln, was in the battle of White Plains. Rev. Moses Adams, of Acton, was chaplain. The Acton company was in the engagement, Thomas Darby being killed. The regiment behaved bravely.

Of a company of eighty-nine men at Dorchester, in the fall of 1776, Acton furnished five.

Thirteen Acton men were of the 670 Middlesex men in the three months' New York Campaign, beginning in November, 1776.

A company sent to Rhode Island in the summer of 1777 had for its first lieutenant Daniel Davis, of Acton. In October, same year, a volunteer company of sixty-three men from Acton and Concord left Concord for Saratoga, arriving there on the 10th and encamping two days. On the 13th they went to Fort Edward. On the 14th and 15th they went on a scout, and on the 16th brought in fifty-three Indians, several Tories and some women. They returned to Saratoga on the 16th, and had the pleasure to see the whole of Burgoyne's army "parade their arms," and march out



WIFE OF CAPTAIN ISAAC DAVIS.



of our lines. They guarded the prisoners to Cambridge. Captain Simon Hunt, of Acton, commanded the company that was of the guard at Cambridge, November 28, 1777.

Acton furnished five men for the army April 20, 1779; four more between April and June; eleven, September 1st; eleven June 5, 1780; ten December 2d; and eight June 15, 1781.

List of the Men of Acton in the War of the Revolution.

Isaac Davis; Capt. Davis lived on the Ward Haskell farm, about one mile west of the meeting-house. John Hayward, Lieut., grandfather to Ebenezer Hayward, lived on the Swift Fletcher place. John Heald, Ensign, entered the Continental army and rose to be Captain; lived on John Nickles' place, and after the war kept tavern on the Westford and Concord road, under the great elms, where John Heald died a few years since, and where his son William now resides. His daughter Lydia gave me a letter of Ensign John, dated at Ticonderoga, March 20, 1776, for his wife, directed to Lieut. John Heald, his father, who was out also in the Revolutionary war. Joseph Piper, clerk, uncle to our Silas Piper; David Forbush, Orderly Sergeant, died 1803, aged 85, uncle to Captain Forbush, covered with David's blood when shot; Oliver Emerson, Sergeant, died in 1818, aged 43 years; George Mayfield, Sergeant; Seth Brooks, sergeant, grandfather of Esquire Nathan Brooks; Luther Blanchard, fifer; Francis Baker, drummer; Joseph Braker 2d; Ephraim Billings, out in most of the war; Oliver Brown; Joseph Chaffin, out in most of the war; Ezekiel Davis, brother to Captain Isaac; David Davis; Elijah Davis; John Davis, Mr. Luther Conant's uncle; Reuben Davis, at the taking of Burgoyne; Jacob Gilbert; Dea. Benjamin Hayward, out in most of the war, brother of James; Abner Hosmer, killed; James Law, Reuben Law, Joseph Locke, Philip Piper; Joseph Reed, out in most of the war, our William R.'s father; Stephen Shepherd, out in most of the war; Solomon Smith, at the taking of Burgoyne; Johathan Stratton; William Thomas, a school teacher, well informed; Thomas Thorp, Ord. Sergeant several years in the Continental army, and was during all the war; died, 96 years old, at Acton; Jonas Hunt, he was Frances Tuttle's uncle; Abraham Young; Stephen Hosmer, brother to Abner, who was killed; total of Capt. Davis's company, Joseph Harris (alive in 1851, 81 years old) said the true number was 38; James Hayward, an exempt, acted with them as volunteer; A. F. Adams, John Adams; Benjamin Brabrook, deacon; Joseph Brabrook; Joseph Barker 1st, our Joseph's grandfather; Samuel Barker, John Barker, William Barker; David Barker, died at Ticonderoga in 1776; James Billings; Jonathan Billings, died 1824, at the age of 85; Joseph Brooks, Daniel Brooks, Silas Brooks, Paul Brooks, George F. Brooks, Elias Barrow, David Brooks; Joseph Brown, Captain during the war, fought at Bunker Hill and Saratoga, and received a ball at Bunker Hill, which lodged in his body and was afterwards skillfully extracted and Brown shot it back at Saratoga; Stephen Chaffin; Elias Chaffin, died in 1832, aged 77; David Chaffin, Simon Chaffin, John Chaffin; Francis Chaffin, alarmed Joseph Reed, went into Continental army and died of small-pox; Robert Chaffin, Esq., Robert's father, died 1828, aged 76; John Cole, William Cutting, Silas Conant, Josiah Davis (Isaac's brother), Stephen Davis, Jonas Davis, James Davis, Ephraim Davis, A. C. Davis, Samuel Davis, Amos Davis; Daniel Davis, Captain, and father to Ebenezer, was at the taking of Burgoyne; Flint Davis; John Dexter, brother to Timothy; Ephraim Dudley; Thomas Derby, killed in battle; Col. John Edwards, Nathaniel Edwards, John Faulkner, A. Faulkner, Nathaniel Faulkner; Col. Francis Faulkner, at the taking of Burgoyne, and was Col., grandfather to Col. Winthrop E. Faulkner; James Faulkner, Ephraim Forbush, Samuel Fitch; James Fletcher, father to Dea. John Fletcher, took part in the Concord fight at sixteen years of age, as a volunteer in Davis's company, afterwards enlisted and served through the war, and died, from the fall of a tree, at 53, without pay and before pensions; Peter Fletchor, Jonas Fletcher, Col. Joseph Fletcher, Daniel Henry Flint, Samuel Fitch, Jude Gilbert; Titus Hayward, colored man, hired by Simon Tuttle; Simon Hayward; Dea. Samuel Hayward, father of Jonas: James Hayward, killed, acted as volunteer in Davis' company; Samuel Hayward, Jr., Josiah Hayward, sons of Samuel; Stephen Hayward, father of Hon. Steven Hayward; Ephraim Hapgood, father of Nathaniel; John Hapgood, John Hapgood, Jr.; Jonathan Hosmer, Esq., Simon's father, died in the army; Abraham Hapgood, father of James; Col. John Heald, father of John H.; Ephraim Hosmer; Samuel Hosmer, father of Dea. Silas Hosmer; Simon Hunt, Lieut., commanding West Company of common militia from Acton, Capt. Faulkner having been promoted to be Major; lived on Bright place; Captain in the war; a good officer; Jonas Hunt; John Hunt, his brother, on Coffin place; Paul Hunt, son of Simon; Nathan Hunt, son of Capt. Simon; Simon Hunt, Jr., son of Capt. Simon; Oliver Houghton, Jonas Heald, Israel Heald, Titus Law, Thomas Law, Stephen Law, Stephen Law, Jr., John Litchfield, John Lampson; Aaron Jones, father to Capt. Abel; Oliver Jones, Samuel Jones, Jonas Munroe, Nathan Marsh, Thomas Noyes (Lieut.), Josiah Noyes, John Oliver, Abel Proctor; Samuel Piper, at Ticonderoga in 1776; Samuel Parlin, Asa Parlin, Esq., Nathan Parlin, Josiah Parker, Jonas Parker, John Prescott; Benj. Prescott, Jos. Robbins, Captain of East Company, lived near old graveyard; Joseph Robbins 2d, also Captain; Georgo Robbins, John Robbins, John Robbins, Jr., Jonathan Robbins, Philip Robbins, Robert Robbins, Ephraim Robbins, James Russell (Captain in the French War), Amos Russell, Moses Richardson, Jonas Shepherd, James Shurland; Samuel Temple, served during tho war, a very good soldier, died 1826, aged 74; Samuel Tuttle; Simon Tuttle, Esq., Francis' grandfather; Eleazer Sawtell; Edward Wetherbee, Edward's father, gave the alarm up to Simon Tuttle's road to Littleton; was at the taking of Burgoyne; Oliver Wetherbee, Ammi Wetherbee, Roger Wheeler, Thomas Wheeler, Sampson Wheeler, Ezra Wheeler, Hezekiah Wheeler, John Proctor Wheeler, Oliver Wheeler, Timothy Wheeler, Samuel Wheeler, Jude Wheelor, John Wheeler, Daniel White, Mark White, Ebenezer White, Moses Woods, Abraham Young, Samuel Wright, John Willey, Lemuel Whitney, Nehemiah Wheeler.

The list is, no doubt, incomplete. Probably forty or fifty more names ought to be added; here are one hundred and eighty-one.

JAMES T. WOODBURY.

Supplies were furnished for the army as needed and called for.

Revolution Items.—Samuel Hosmer, father of Deacon Silas, was in the Revolution. He went down to Rhode Island, lived upon horse flesh and berries. He was a born fisherman.

Ezekiel Davis, a soldier of the Revolution, brother of Captain Isaac Davis, in his company. Wounded in the hat at the Concord fight. Died February 15, 1820, aged sixty-eight.

John Cole, captain in Colonel Robinson's regiment; served in Rhode Island from July, 1777, to January 1, 1778.

Simon Hunt, captain in Third Regiment Militia.

Benjamin Brabrook, second lieutenant; died January 14, 1827, eighty-five years, six months.

Thomas B. Darby, killed at battle of White Plains, 1776.

Fifteen Acton men were in that battle.

East Acton Company: Captain, Joseph Robbins; Israel Heald, first lieutenant; Robert Chaffin, second lieutenant.

Littleton, February 19, 1776.—Jonathan Fletcher was a minute-man at Lexington, April 19, 1775. He enlisted in Captain Abijah Wyman's company, William Prescott's regiment. He was at the battle of Bunker Hill, at which Colonel Prescott's regiment suffered such severe loss of life. At the siege of Boston, on Winter Hill, January, 1776, as fifer from Acton. He was lieutenant and captain until the close of the war—five years. Eighteen years old when enlisted. Son of Major Daniel.

Colonel Francis Faulkner and Captain Simon Hunt were in the battle of White Plains, Colonel Eleazer Brooks' regiment; behaved finely on this occasion.

Ralph Waldo Emerson's Address.—At the second centennial anniversary of the incorporation of the

town of Concord. September 12, 1835, ten of the surviving veterans who were in arms at the Bridge on the 19th of April, 1775, honored the festival with their presence; four of the ten were from Acton—Thomas Thorp, Solomon Smith, John Oliver, Aaron Jones. Ralph Waldo Emerson, the orator of that day, thus speaks of these men:

"The presence of these aged men, who were in arms on that day, seems to bring us nearer to it. The benignant Providence which has prolonged their lives to this hour, gratifies the strong curiosity of the new generation. The Pilgrims are gone; but we see what manner of persons they were who stood in the worst perils of the Revolution. We hold by the hand the last of the invincible men of old, and confirm from living lips the sealed records of time. And you, my fathers, whom God and the history of your country have ennobled, may well bear a chief part in keeping this peaceful birthday of our town. You are indeed extraordinary heroes. If ever men in arms had a spotless cause, you had. You have fought a good fight. And having quit you like men in the battle, you have quit yourselves like men in your virtuous families, in your corn-fields, and in society.

"We will not hide your honorable gray hairs under perishing laurel leaves, but the eye of affection and veneration follows you. You are set apart, and forever, for the esteem and gratitude of the human race. To you belongs a better badge than stars and ribbons. This prospering country is your ornament, and this expanding nation is multiplying your praise with millions of tongues."

THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR.—Acton has preserved its record as a gunpowder settlement from the start. Before its separate organization as a town, during the Colonial period, there are proofs which show its preparations for self-defence, in case of attack from the Indians or any other foes. After that date the town records show the same. March 21, 1744, the town voted to procure powder and bullets as a town stock. At a later date the town voted to replenish the stock of ammunition.

The town had an important part in "the French and Indian War," 1756–63.

There is a tradition that Captain Gershom Davis led out a company from Acton in 1759, and that Captain J. Robbins led another company four years later near the close of the war.

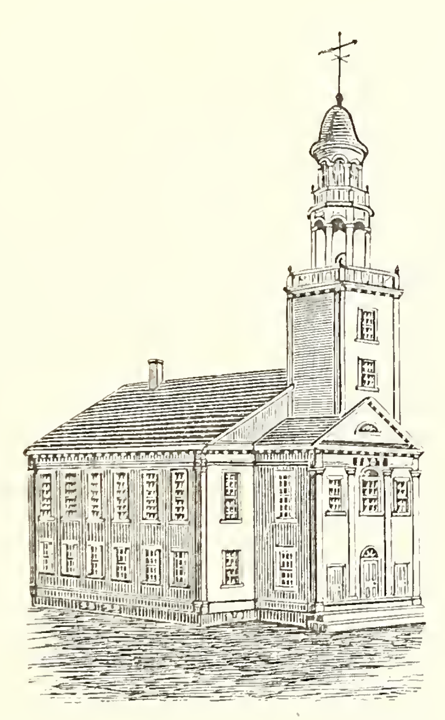
Major Daniel Fletcher was born within the present territorial limits of Acton, October 18, 1718. He was a lieutenant in Captain David Melvin's company from March to September in 1747, and was stationed at Northfield. He was a captain of a company of foot in his Majesty's Service, in a regiment raised by the Province of Massachusetts Bay for the reduction of Canada, whereof Ebenezer Nichols, Esq., was colonel, in which expedition he was wounded and taken prisoner. Enlisted as captain March 13, 1758, to November 28, 1858. He was captain in Colonel Frye's regiment, and in the service in the Province of Nova Scotia, after the 1st of January, 1760, and at the time of their discharge.

In 1768 he was a member of the House of Representatives of His Majesty's Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England. On June 26, 1776, he was elected by ballot by the Massachusetts Assembly, major for the Third Battalion destined to Canada. He died in the fifty-ninth year of his age. See his epitaph in the record of Woodlawn Cemetery. He had nine children, all born in Acton,—Daniel, Charles (died young), Peter, Sarah, Ruth, Joseph, Charles, Jonathan. His oldest son, Daniel, married Ann Bacon, of Acton, September 11, 1760. They had one child, Ann, born November 12, 1769, married May 27, 1788, to James Law. Peter married Martha Farrar, of Acton, and they had several children. Ruth married Joseph Barker, and they had several children. Joseph married Abigail Bacon, of Lincoln, Massachusetts.

THE SECOND MEETING-HOUSE.—The town had much difficulty in locating this house. At one time they voted to build at the junction of the road leading from West Acton with the road leading from Ensign Josiah Noyes to Moses Richardson, near a flat rock at that point, supposed to be the one lying east of the Puddle hole, on Joseph Reed's land, and west of Francis Barker's, now occupied by Mr. Maurice Lane.

This vote was afterwards reconsidered, and they finally left it to a committee to decide, consisting of Joseph B. Varnum, of Dracut, John Whitney, of Lancaster, and Walter McFarland, of Hopkington. The committee decided that the house ought to stand upon the site now occupied by the present town-house.

Their report was accepted by a vote of 73 to 59. After the house was located it was thought best to have it face a Common, and for this purpose the following purchases of land were made: Of Deacon Joseph Brabrook, 25 rods at $200 per acre, $31.40; of John White, a little over an acre, Mr. White to remove his house and fruit trees, $460; of Paul Brooks, one-half acre and 27 rods, $80.40. In addition to these the following gifts of land were made to the town: By James Fletcher, father of Deacon John, 9 rods; Samuel and James Jones, 1 acre and 27 rods. The town seems to have been especially indebted to him for its Common. He was a prominent man at that time and represented the town in the General Court that year, and he was doubtless a moving spirit in the matter. He was a lawyer, and had an office in the north end of the house lately occupied by A. L. Noyes, of the Monument House. He built and resided in the house now the home of Rev. F. P. Wood. He constructed a turnpike over the hill by his house upon the elevation of land over which it passed, but he became financially embarrassed and left for New Orleans to escape imprisonment for debt.



THE SECOND MEETING HOUSE. 1807.

In connection with the building of the second meeting-house was the following vote:—"At a meeting, November 3, 1806, it was propounded whether the committee shall at the sale of the pews give the people any spirituous liquors at the expense of the town—passed in the negative." This prohibition idea seems to be no new notion in the history of the town:

"*September* 4, 1812.

"To know if the town will provide any refreshments for the companies in this town on muster day, and pass any vote or votes the town may think proper upon the above article.

"Voted to provide some refreshments for the companies on muster day.

"Voted to raise forty-six dollars.

"Voted to choose a com. to provide the following: 200 w. beef; 50 D. O. cheese; 3 bushel of meal made into bread; 2 D. O. pottatoes; 200 pickles; 10 gallons of W. I. Rum."

This muster was to be on Acton Common, September 1, 1806. The town voted to choose a committee of five persons to make a draft of such a meeting-house as they shall think proper for the accommodation of the inhabitants, and report to the town at that next meeting. Voted to choose said committee by ballot. The following persons were elected for the purpose: Aaron Jones, David Barnard, Winthrop Faulkner, Phineas Wheeler, Captain David Davis. The dimensions of the building subsequently reported by this committee were fifty-seven feet long and fifty-five wide, with a projection of fifteen feet in front. *Voted*, to accept and build the meeting-house as reported. *Voted*, to build the year ensuing and have said house finished January 1, 1808. *Voted*, that the committee who drafted the plan be the committee to have charge of the building.

It was for the times a generous appropriation, and the structure was successfully completed and was universally admired as a model in its design. It had an elevated tower for the belfry and above the belfry another ornamental circular story, supported by high posts, with a circular and graceful roof, rising from whose centre projected the elevated iron shaft for the support of the vane.

The internal arrangements were in harmony—a spacious vestibule, with three doors from the outside and the same from within; square pews, with rising seats; an elevated pulpit, approached by long, winding steps on either side; a gallery, high and ranging on three sides, curving in front; a ceiling, high and arched overhead.

The artistic effect from within on the Sabbath, when the whole town was supposed to be present, and the great choir joined with the pastor in giving effect to the service in prayer and song, and all the congregation stood with reverent mien, was impressive to any one participating. The Sabbath in those days had an interest, civil, social and religious, beyond the ordinary rountine of later dates.

The sacrifices made in constructing this costly temple intensified the appreciation by the people of its beauty and its uses. There was timber enough in this building to construct a good-sized village, spread lightly around according to modern style. It was of the best quality and furnished in lavish abundance.

The first bell, which was mounted high up in the tower, cost $570, and when it swung out its peals on Sabbath morn it was a missive to all the households in the town. It meant business as well as worship to get all things in readiness and reach the steps of the church before the last stroke of the tolling bell.

There must have been at one time at least thirty horse-sheds ranged in lines in the rear of the building and giving an impressive outlook to its surroundings, especially on the Sabbath and town-meeting days, when they would all be occupied.

John C. Park, Esq., grandson of Parson Adams, writes to Hon. John Fletcher from Boston, February 6, 1874, acknowledging the receipt of the *Acton Monitor:* "Some of the happiest days of my childhood were spent at Acton, and many pleasant memories are revived. I must come and see for myself, for I cannot realize the burning of gas in a village where I helped my grandmother and aunt to make 'dips.' Speakiug of Hosmer, one of my earliest recollections is my childish admiration of the great 'H,' a silver-plated letter on the back of the chaire which brought Deacon Hosmer to meeting. Do you remember it? Do you remember how we used to turn up the seats for prayer in the old church, and the clatter it made letting them down at the close, and how one naughty little boy (John C. Park) used to keep his to the last?"

Persons connected with this church so far as obtained: Deacons: Simon Hunt, Benjamin Hayward, Josiah Noyes, John Wheeler, John White, Phinehas Wheeler, Daniel Fletcher Barker, Silas Hosmer, John White 2d.

Pew-holders (left body pews): Mrs. Simeon Hayward, David Barnard, Esq., Stevens Hayward, Esq., Deacon John White, Luther Conant.

Right body pews: Simon Hosmer, Esq., Silas Holden, Levi Waitt, Deacon Benjamin Hayward, Seth Brooks.

Choristers: Winthrop Faulkner, Silas Jones, Luther B. Jones, Daniel Jones.

Players on musical instruments: Bass viol, Jonathan Billing, Abraham B. Handley; double bass viol, Eben Davis; violin, Winthrop E. Faulkner, Henry Skinner; clarionet, Elnathan Jones, Samuel Hosmer.

Singers: Polly Davis, Ellen Jones, Lucy J. Jones, Abigail Jones, Jerusha Brooks, Ann Piper, Captain Abel Jones, Simon Davis, Seth Davis, Benjamin Wild, Amasa Wild, Edward Wetherbee, Oliver Wetherbee, Jedidiah Tuttle, Rebecca Davis, Susan Davis, Catharine Wetherbee, Lucinda Wetherbee, Polly Wetherbee, Susan Piper, Lucinda Piper, Mary Faulkner, Charlotte Faulkner, Catharine Faulkner, Susan Faulkner, Clarissa Jones, Amasa Davis. Jessie Pierce, Uriah Foster, Alden Fuller, Jonathan Piper, Dr. Harris Cowdry.

Rev. Mr. Adams, the second minister, enjoyed the advantages of this spacious and elegant church during the last eleven years of his pastorate and of his life; Rev. Mr. Shedd during the eleven years of his pastorate. The building stood for over fifty years as an attractive centre for civil and religious uses. By the decision of the courts the building came into the possession of the First Parish, and this parish deeded it to the town June 4, 1859.

In the great fire of November, 1862, which took in the barn of the hotel and which consumed the hotel, the tailor's shop building, occupied by Samuel Despean as a tailor-shop and by Daniel Jones as a store, the shoe factory of John Fletcher & Sons, and threatened at one time the whole village; a blazing shingle was wafted on high across the Common and struck the highest roof of the church tower, became fixed and soon ignited the steeple. The people below stood helpless and appalled, as nothing could be done to stay the raging flames. The whole building with all its massive timbers were in one brief hour a heap of smouldering ashes. This earthly structure went up as in a chariot of fire and was translated to the third heavens by the order of Him to whom it was originally dedicated. The building has gone, but its memories of pastor and choir and congregation abide.

William D. Tuttle.—The time when the very first settlements were made on the present territory of Acton is a matter of some uncertainty. It is evident from the town records that the town was pretty well settled over at the date of its incorporation. People were living in all parts of it at that time. The Indians had withdrawn to other hunting-grounds, and had ceased to be a cause of fear or annoyance.

The first public enterprise was the building of a meeting-house for public worship, being one of the conditions of the act of incorporation, and the next was to construct roads by which the people could get to it.

These were little more than bridle-paths cut through the forest from one homestead to another and connecting them all more or less directly with the meeting-house and the mills. That it was the day of humble beginning and of many privations and hardships we can well believe.

For lack of bridges, streams were crossed at what were called ford-ways. Forests were to be felled, houses to be erected, fences to be built, which required the strong arms of a sturdy race of men. Life was real and earnest to the men and women of that time. If their home life was barren of many of the luxuries and conveniences of modern days, there was in it a large element of downright sincerity, hearty good cheer and mutual helpfulness.

The church was then the centre of the social as well as the religious life of the people. It must have been an interesting sight to see the people on Sunday coming up from all parts of the town on horseback or on foot, for carriages, whether spring or otherwise, were not yet, to attend divine service at the ancient church.

It was here that neighborly courtesies were exercised, mutual acquaintances and friendship formed, many of which developed in after years into more intimate relations. The town-meeting—that nursery of statesmen—was also another of the educators of those days. Four or five times in a year did the inhabitants come together as a body to discuss their local affairs, to choose their town officers and to make regulations for their mutual welfare. If any one had a grievance, if his taxes pressed too heavily, if his accommodations in the way of roads were insufficient—whatever might be the cause of his complaint, here was a tribunal of his peers, where he could be heard and where justice was usually done.

From its first settlement to the present time Acton has been mainly an agricultural town. The first settlers depended for their livelihood on what they could get from the soil and from what grew above it. They had cattle, horses, sheep and hogs, the latter being permitted for many years to run at large and pick up their living in the woods.

Their agriculture was a varied one; money was scarce and hard to get. Everything that could contribute to the support and sustenance of a family was included in the farmer's course of husbandry. Wool, flax, Indian corn, rye, oats, beans, turnips, beef, pork and the products of the dairy were the principal products raised. Clothing was largely of home manufacture and the noise of the spinning-wheel and loom was heard in every well-appointed household.

They had plenty of apples, all natural fruit (the finer varieties being of later introduction), and nearly all the large farms had a cider-mill, which was kept busy during the months of October and November in producing a beverage all too common in those days.

From a census return made in 1790, it appears that no large number of cattle and horses was kept compared with what is usual at present, and but little English hay cut; the natural meadows being relied upon to a great extent for the supply of hay for stock.

Coming down to a later time, to the year 1800, a period of sixty-five years, we find the town's people in comparatively easy circumstances. Many had accumulated a fair estate for those times. More pretentious houses were erected and an era of general prosperity seems to have dawned.

In 1807 the town built the second meeting-house at an expense of nearly or quite $10,000, paid for by the sale of pews and a town tax of $1151, all of which was accomplished without apparent difficulty.

The manufacture of bellows was carried on extensively by Ebenezer Davis, senior and junior, for many years in the east part of the town.

A large and well-appointed flour and grain mill was erected on an ancient mill site by Daniel Wetherbee, in 1840, which, under the management of himself and son, has continued to the present time.

The pencil manufactory of Henry M. Smith, East Acton, was built in 1848, by Ebenezer Davis, Esq., and has been occupied successively since that time by Benjamin Davis, sash and blind manufactory; by William Schouler, print works; by A. G. Fay as pencil manufactory, and by its present occupant also in the manufacture of lead-pencils.

Among the various industries pursued for many years in the early part of the century, was the coopering business, from fifteen to twenty thousand barrels annually having been manufactured. The little cooper-shops, so numerous in all parts of the town, in which many of the inhabitants found employment in the winter season, is conclusive proof that the business was a source of very considerable income.

The indenture of Gill Piper March 25, 1790, copied from the town papers is here inserted as a specimen of the times and the business then popular.

THE INDENTURE OF GILL PIPER.

March 25, 1790.

This indenture witnesseth, That Francis Faulkner, Aaron Jones and Jonas Heald, Selectmen of the town of Acton, Mass., Middlesex Co., put and bind Gill Piper, a minor, now under the care of the Selectmen aforesaid, unto Paul Hunt, and Betsey, his wife, to Larne the Cooper's trade; after the manner of an apprentice to dwell and serve from the date hereof until he, the said Gill Piper, shall arrive to the age of 21 years; during all which term the said Gill, his said Master and Mistress worthily and faithfully shall serve, their secrets keep close, their Lawful and reasonable commands Readily obey and perform; damage to his said Master and Mistress he shall not do, or suffer to be done by others without informing his said Master or Mistress of the same; tavern he shall not frequent; at cards, dice, or any other unlawful game he shall not play; matrimony he shall not contract, or fornication commit with any person; but in all things behave himself as a good and faithful apprentice until his fulfilment of his years or term above mentioned; and the said Paul Hunt, for himself and his heirs, do covenant, promise and agree with the said Francis Faulkner, Aaron Jones, and Jonas Heald, selectmen of the said town of Acton, and their successors in said trust, in this manner following, that is to say, that said Paul Hunt will teach or cause to be taught the said Gill Piper to read and write and cipher (if capable to learn) by giving him one month's schooling in each of the first two years of his service and one month in the last two years of his service, and will find and provide for the same Gill Piper good and sufficient meat, drink, washing and lodging, and also sufficient apparel suitable for one of his degree and calling, during the said term, and at the end of said term to dismiss the said Gill Piper with two good suits of Apparel, one suitable for Sabbath days, the other for working days. In witness whereof, the parties set their hands and seals to this indenture, the 22d day of March, 1790.

(Signed) PAUL HUNT.
FRANCIS FAULKNER.
AARON JONES.
JONAS HEALD

Signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of
JOSEPH BAKER, JR.,
JOB F. BROOKS.

Middlesex, ss:
March ye 25th, 1790.
The above indenture considered and approved of by
SILAS TAYLOR,
FRANCIS FAULKNER,
two Justices of Peace.

Gill Piper has not been heard from since so far as the town records go. We may infer with this start in life, that he became a worthy citizen. Nothing to the contrary has come to eye or ear.

Many hop kilns were erected, but in a few years the prices received were so fluctuating and unsatisfactory as to deter many from embarking in it and the business at length became so unremunerative that their culture was abandoned altogether.

CENTRE VILLAGE.—Previous to the time of the building of the second meeting-house there was no considerable village in the town. There were at that time a very few dwelling houses in the Centre, probably not more than a scant half-dozen in all. At this time there was, beside the first meeting-house, the old tavern, kept by Daniel Brooks, his widow Caroline and his son Paul, and afterwards occupied by Nathaniel Stearns; the well-known parsonage built by Moses Adams, sometimes called the Bullard place; the house of Benjamin Brabrook, situated a little easterly from the residence of Edward Tuttle; the house of John White, blacksmith, a little westerly of the present town-house; a cottage-house, where Francis Hosmer now lives, and one where Eddie F. Conant resides.

The building of the second meeting-house gave an impetus to building operations in this village; and about this time, 1807, the tavern first occupied by Henry Durant, afterward by Silas Jones, for many years and others later, was built, as also the house now occupied by T. F. Noyes; L. B. Jones' house now occupied by Rev. F. P. Wood; one on the site ot that occupied by William D. Tuttle; one by John and James Fletcher, lately removed to make room for the Memorial Library. The house so long occupied by Stephen Weston, now occupied by John F. Davis, and the Cyrus Dole house now occupied by J. E. Cutter and the Edward Tuttle house.

The large mansion west of the town-house, long the residence of Hon. Stevens Hayward, was built about this time by Doctor Peter Goodknow. A store was kept on the site of the library building by James and John Fletcher, which was burnt. At a later date the store now occupied by M. E. Taylor, was built and kept by Joseph W. Tuttle, Francis Tuttle, James Tuttle, Rufus Holden, Daniel Jones, J. E. Cutter and many others, almost continuously to the present time. Samuel Jones, Esq., had a law-office for a short time where the house of A. L. Noyes stands. Samuel Jones, Sr., married the widow of Captain Isaac Davis, and resided on the place now occupied by Rev. F. P. Wood. To his public spirit we are largely indebted for Acton's beautiful Common.

In 1806 the town bought of Captain Paul Brooks 107 square rods of land at the east end of the Common, and in 1807, of John White 154 rods, northerly and westerly of the second meeting-house.

In 1806 Samuel Jones, Esq., in consideration of the good-will and respect he had for the inhabitants of Acton, deeded to the town about one and a quarter acres of land extending along the south side of the present Common, from near the house of A. L. Noyes to the house of Luke Smith, to be used as a town-common. The town also purchased of Joseph Brabrook thirty-one rods of land in 1808, on the northerly side of the Common, extending from the Robert Chaffin place to the town-house.

At this time there were not so many houses where the thriving villages of West and South Acton now stand. The latter was universally called Mill Corner, and had three dwelling-houses within a radius of a quarter of a mile, the Ammiruhamah Faulkner House, the tavern and store owned and occupied by Samuel Jones and his son Captain Aaron, the cottage-house, nestled under the hill owned by Captain Abel Jones, a son of Aaron; and the mills consisting of a saw and grist-mill and a fulling-mill, where cloth was dressed and fulled. Many now living can remember the time when these, with a few out-buildings, were all that made up the village of Mill Corner.

Where the enterprising village of West Acton now stands there was less in the way of building and business. Bradley Stone built the brick house on the corner in the centre of the village. He established a blacksmith and wheelwright-shop, near where the house of Varnum B. Mead now stands, and carried on the business for some years. He also built the first store in West Acton, which was first opened by Sidney and Henry Bull, and afterwards kept by Burbeck & Tenney.

The building of the Fitchburg Railroad, in 1844, marks an important era in the history of the town. Entering the limits of the town at the southeast corner and passing westerly and northerly through the south and west parts of the town, a sudden impetus was given to the growth of these villages, which has continued ever since.

Before this time a communication with our commercial metropolis, Boston, was slow and difficult. The country trader's merchandise had to be hauled by means of ox or horse-teams from the city. Lines of stage-coaches indeed radiated in all directions from the city for the conveyance of passengers, but so much time was consumed in going and returning by this conveyance that a stop over night was absolutely necessary if any business was to be done.

Instead of being whirled rapidly in an hour's time or less into Boston, and having ample time for the transaction of business and returning at night with equal ease and rapidity to our homes, a visit to Boston before the era of the railroad was something to be planned as a matter of serious concern. All the internal commerce between city and country necessitated stage-coaches and teams of every description, and on all the main lines of road might be seen long lines of four and eight-horse teams conveying merchandise to and from the city.

As a matter of necessity, taverns and hostelries were numerous and generally well patronized. Thus in the east part of Acton, on the road leading from Boston to Keene, there were no less than four or five houses of public entertainment. With the advent of railroads all this changed. The Fitchburg Railroad was completed to West Acton in the autumn of 1844, and that village became a distributing point for the delivery of goods destined for more remote points above.

Two names may be mentioned in connection with the location of this road through the limits of this town,—Colonel Winthrop E. Faulkner, of South Acton, and Bradley Stone, of West Acton.

Public-spirited and powerfully impressed with the importance of securing the location of the road through their respective villages, they labored untiringly until this was secured, positively and beyond a doubt. No personal effort was spared and no obstacle was suffered to stand in the way, until the coveted end was gained. Who will say that their ambition was not a worthy one, and has not been amptly justified?

The April meeting warrant for 1840 contained this article: "To see if the town will take measures to have trees set out on the Common." On this article the town granted leave to set trees on the Common, and chose a committee of seven to say where they shall be placed. Francis Tuttle, John Fletcher, Winthrop E. Faulkner, John White, Nathan Brooks, Simon Tuttle and Rufus Holden were appointed as this committee.

The said trees were to consist of rock maple, buttonwood, elm and white ash. As the result of this action of the town, the committee extended a general invitation to all the inhabitants to bring in suitable trees for transplanting, of the kinds mentioned, on the 19th of April. As the 19th came on Sunday that year, the trees were set on the following day under the direction of the committee. The people responded nobly, and from all parts of the town the citizens came into the village on the morning of the 20th loaded with trees; nearly all lived and grew well. Most of the rock maples were set out at a later date, 1859.

Our notice of the village of the Centre would be incomplete without the mention of the name of one prominent in the business history of the town for years. John Fletcher, at first a country trader in a small way, began the manufacture of boots and shoes in 1815. Finding a ready sale for his goods, he continued to enlarge his manufacturing facilities until his boots and shoes were well and creditably known far and wide. He associated his two sons, John and Edwin, with him under the firm-name of John Fletcher & Sons. The firm did a successful business for many years.

THE GREAT FIRE.—In the evening of Oct. 24, 1862, occurred the greatest fire Acton has ever known. Beginning at the stable near the hotel, the shoe manufactory of John Fletcher & Sons, the hotel, and store occupied by Daniel Jones, and finally the town hall, formerly the meeting-house, built in 1807, all were in a short time consumed.

The incendiary had done his work but too well, and had left, as he had threatened, a black mark in the Centre Village. Looking over the scene of desolation, it seemed as though the place was doomed to extinction. Good friends, however, came to the rescue. In

the November warrant for town-meeting an article was inserted to see what action the town will take in regard to building a new town-house. At this meeting it was voted to choose a committee of six persons, one from each school district, to obtain plans, specifications and estimates to report at a future meeting.

On Tuesday, the 2d day of December, another meeting was called to hear the report of the committee. At this meeting it was voted not to build a town-house. Another meeting was called on the 15th of the same month. In the warrant was inserted the following: "To see if the town will build a house suitable for a town hall and armory for the Davis Guards."

At this meeting it was voted that when the town build a town-house it be built on the spot where the old one stood. Also voted to choose a committee of seven, by ballot, with full powers to build a town-house with an armory in it suitable for the town within the next twelve months. This committee consisted of Daniel Wetherbee, Samuel Hosmer, James Tuttle, Cyrus Fletcher, David M. Handley, Artemas M. Rowell and Luther Conant.

This was erected the next year, as also the large shoe manufactory of John Fletcher and a new hotel by John E. Cutter. Thus, in a measure, was replaced Acton's great loss by fire.

Among other noted residents of the village for many years was Jonas Blodgett, blacksmith and auctioneer. He came to Acton about the year 1830, and carried on his trade until failing health and eyesight obliged him to retire.

WEST ACTON.[1]—The brick house on the corner was built by Bradley Stone. He also built the first store at the corner in 1837, where Mead Brothers are now, occupied formerly by Burbeck & Tenney, then Sidney and Henry Bull.

In 1858 Charles Robinson moved that building to where it now stands, occupied by George Conant, bluine manufactory, and built the present store. The hall now used by Isaac Davis' Grand Army Post was built by Mr. Robinson for the use of the Universalist Society, and was used by it for ten years.

The first meat market was opened by John R. Houghton under the tin-shop of L. M. Holt, and was occupied by him until he built his present market. A blacksmith-shop was built by Bradley Stone where the house of V. B. Mead now stands. When this was burned he built a new shop near the site of the old one, and where it now stands, occupied by Samuel A. Guilford. The shop was run for awhile by Enoch Hall, who in 1865 transformed a barn standing near it into the present wheelwright-shop of Herbert F. Clark.

The New England Vise Company in 1868 erected a building for its business which proved unsuccessful. The Butter and Cheese Factory Company was incorporated about 1873, and ran three or four years. This venture proved unprofitable, and the building erected for the company is now occupied by William H. Lawrence, blacksmith, and Waldo Littlefield, carriage manufacturer.

A part of the ground now occupied by the refrigerator and apple-house of A. & O. Mead & Co. was a building put up by the West Acton Steam Mill Company in 1848, which was burned in 1852, and, as the business had not been satisfactory, was not rebuilt. The building for the manufacture of overalls and clothing was put up by Charles H. Taylor in 1886.

Soon after the railroad was built through West Acton a tin-shop was built by Henderson Rowell, who occupied it until his death, in 1860. Since then it has been carried on by various persons in the same place, and is now run by Lorenzo M. Holt, who does a large and increasing business.

About 1858 a shoemaker's-shop was built, and was occupied by Oliver C. Wyman until his death, in 1885. The business since then has been carried on by William Mott.

In 1845 Shepley & Davis built a house, which was occupied by a Mr. Page and called Page's Tavern. After a few years it was purchased by Adelbert and Oliver Mead, and reoccupied by them for a dwelling-house a number of years. Since then it has been occupied by various tenants.

In 1848 Dr. Reuben Green opened an office. In 1852 he was bought out by Dr. Isaiah Hutchins, who still occupies the building erected by Dr. Green. In 1848 a post-office was opened in Dr. Green's office, in which building it remained until Dr. Hutchins, in 1854, resigned, whereupon it was transferred to the store, where it remained until the Cleveland administration, when Hanson Littlefield became postmaster, and the office was removed to his store. In 1889 Charles B. Stone, the present incumbent, was reappointed, and removed the office to the room specially built for it.

The grain and grist-mill and cider-mill of E. C. Parker & Co. was built in 1868, burned in 1869 and rebuilt in 1870. The cigar-factory of Frank R. Knowlton was over the store of Hanson Littlefield until the new factory was built in 1889.

Tubs and Pails.—B. F. Taft began the manufacture in the building and was succeeded by Samuel Sargent. Sargent was succeeded by Enoch Hall, who, with his sons, now carry on the business. The business has become an important source of thrift. It was started seventeen years ago and has been steadily increasing.

The lumbering business has been introduced and enlarged; wood lots and farms have been bought in the neighboring towns with reference to the lumber supply. Tubs, churns and pails are manufactured in large quantities and sent for market in all directions, as far as Australia, South America, California and Europe. Twenty-five men are employed through the year, with extra help in the winter. Estimated average sales per year, $50,000.

[1] Items furnished by A. A. Wyman, Esq.

Mrs. John Hapgood, the mother of Mrs. Nash, a few weeks before her death, when enjoying unusual clearness of mind, though over eighty years old, wrote out carefully these items from her own personal recollections, and the original copy in her handwriting is now with the town clerk. The statements have since been corroborated by Deacon Samuel Hosmer, over eighty-six years old, whose memory is quite clear and retentive.

H. A. Gould's Place.—Deacon Jonathan Hosmer was the first settler on the place that is now owned by Mr. Gould; he had four sons—Jonathan, Stephen, Abner and Jonas. Abner was the one that fell, April 19, 1775, at Concord Bridge, with Captain Davis. I remember of hearing my aunt Sarah Hosmer, sister of N. D. Hosmer and wife of Samuel Hosmer, when she was very young, say that her grandfather went out to see if he could hear any news on that day, and when he returned he groaned when he passed their window to go into the front door. What sorrow was then experienced!

Stephen Hosmer, one of the sons of Deacon Jonathan Hosmer, settled on the homestead with his father (at Gould's place). His sons were three—Stephen, Nathan Davis and Jonathan. Nathan Davis Hosmer, son of Stephen Hosmer, bought the place, the homestead, and built the new house which is now occupied by Mr. Gould.

The old house was pretty large for those days, two front rooms with entry between, upright back part with two rooms below. The back chanbers were low and unfinished.

Aaron Hosmer, son of Nathan D. Hosmer, had made arrangements to keep the place, the homestead, as his own; but he died a few months before his father died. If Aaron Hosmer had lived, the place would probably have been in the Hosmer name now, which would have been the fourth generation.

Jonathan Hosmer, son of Deacon Jonathan Hosmer, bought and settled on the place now occupied by Mr. Neil, the Simon Hosmer place. It is the first house beyond the Kelley place toward Acton Centre. He had but one son, Simon Hosmer, Esq. He bought the place and lived there most of his lifetime. Afterwards it went into other hands. Francis Tuttle owned it at one time.

Noyes & Barker Place.—Ephraim Hosmer owned the farm that is now occupied by Noyes & Barker. He was a nephew of Deacon Jonathan Hosmer; he had a number of children, but buried two or three by the dreadful disease of malignant sore throat. My grandmother, Sarah Davis, wife of Stephen Hosmer, said that one of the girls told her she was hungry but she could not swallow—a terrible disease to get into a family. He had two sons that lived, Joel and Samuel, father of Deacon Silas Hosmer.

Joel kept the home place, but when the turnpike was being made, he thought it would be important to have a hotel or tavern, as it used to be called, and he built the large house for that purpose now owned by Joseph Noyes and Joseph Barker; but custom failed, it did not meet his expectation, and after a few years the farm had to be sold, a very great disappointment to him and all of his family.

Frank Knowlton's Place.—Samuel Hosmer, brother to Joel Hosmer and son of Ephraim Hosmer, bought the place that Frank Knowlton now owns. He lived in a small house, but had quite a large barn. He was the father of Deacon Silas Hosmer, who succeeded his father on the home farm and built the large two-story house since remodeled by F. R. Knowlton, who is the husband of Emma, daughter of Deacon Silas Hosmer.

Handley Place.—Mr. John Tuttle owned that place in 1800 and was called a very wealthy man. It has been owned by many different persons since—Jacob Priest, Reuben Handley.

Isaac Reed's Place.—William Reed was the first owner of the farm, living there during his lifetime. Then his son William bought and lived there during his life. The present owner is his son, Isaac Reed.

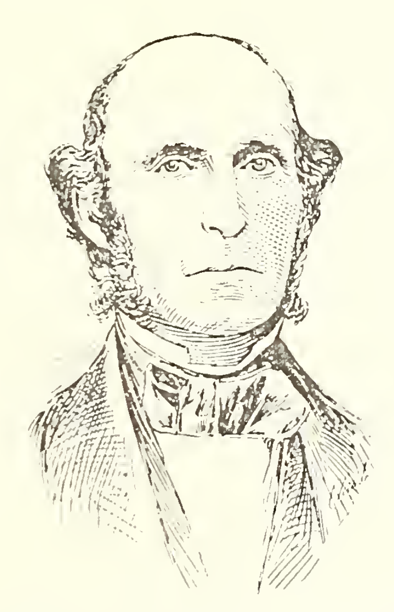
Andrew Hapgood's Place.—It was owned by a widow Brooks. Ephraim Hapgood and Nathaniel Hapgood, two brothers, bought it of her, Ephraim keeping the old house and Nathaniel building a new one just above it. Ephraim Hapgood and Nathaniel Hapgood were sons of Ephraim Hapgood.

Ebenezer Smith's Place.—Mr. Smith bought the farm when he was quite a young man (do not remember the person); the house was an old one, but they lived in it a number of years, then built a new one; it was called nice in those days. After his death Edwin Parker owned it, living there several years, then sold it to the present owner, Amasa Knowlton.

Ephraim Hapgood's Farm.—Ephraim Hapgood thought it would be a good plan to go to Maine and take up a large tract of land and settle there, as he had several boys. Accordingly, one summer, he went to see about it. The next summer he took two of his sons and went to Maine, to a place called now Norridgewock, and worked all summer, intending to take his family the next year.

When the time came for them to start for home Ephraim, grandfather of Mrs. Nash, one of the sons, said he would walk home instead of going by water, and by that means saved his life, for the vessel was shipwrecked and the father and son were both drowned.

Ephraim Hapgood gave up all idea of going to Maine after the death of his father and brother, bought the home-place, took care of his mother, living there his lifetime. After his decease his two youngest sons, John and Benjamin Franklin, bought the farm, keeping it together several years. Then Benjamin F. bought out his brother John and lived there until his death. He was killed at the crossing of the Fitchburg Railroad, near Andrew Hapgood. Nathaniel Hapgood was also killed at the same time. The farm was afterwards bought by Cyrus Hapgood. He kept



DEACON SAMUEL HOSMER.

THE ONLY SURVIVING MEMBER OF THE FIRST CHURCH ORGANIZATION IN ACTON.



it a few years then sold it to a Mr. Prescott. The house was burned not a great while afterwards. The land is now owned by individuals—only a small house upon it, owned by Mr. Blanchard, for the accommodation of hired help.

Simon Blanchard's Place.—Abraham Hapgood, brother of Ephraim Hapgood, and son of the one that was drowned, bought the place and lived there during his life.

James Hapgood, his only son, bought the place, keeping it several years, afterwards sold it to Alvin Raymond. He kept it a few years, then sold it to Mr. Jonathan Fletcher. After his death Simon Blanchard, the present owner, bought the place; married for his first wife Elizabeth Fletcher, daughter of Mr. Jonathan Fletcher.

Mr. Hager's Place.—Elias Chaffin lived on this place a number of years. The next owner was Jonathan B. Davis. He kept it a good many years, then sold it to the present owner, Mr. George Hager.

Leland Place.—It was the home of Captain Stevens Hayward, the father of Stevens Hayward, Esq. Mr. Hayward living there during his life, then his son Stevens owned it many years, afterwards he sold it to Benjamin Lentell. He lived there several years and sold it to Mr. Leland.

A. A. Haynes' Place.—It was the home of Deaeon Benjamin Hayward. He had three sons—Moses, Aaron and Luke. Moses was accidentally shot by his own son. His home then was the late Cyrus Hayward's place. Aaron Hayward after the death of his father settled on the homestead, but died when quite young.

Alden Fuller Place.—Nathaniel Faulkner in the olden time lived there; he owned the place; he had several sons. Nathaniel kept the home-place and lived there during his life. His daughter Sarah married Alden Fuller. He bought the home-place and lived there during his life.

Houghton Place.—Oliver Houghton bought that place, living in a very old house for a long time. There have been two houses built on that place, the low one built first. Levi Houghton succeeded his father and built the new house. Since his death George H. S. Houghton, a nephew, owns the farm and is living on it.

Mrs. Hapgood's Place was formerly owned by the Faulkners. A widow lived here who had three children. The son's name was Moses. There must have been two generations before it went into other hands. It has been owned by Brown and a Wilson. Daniel Wetherby bought it afterwards, then John Hapgood bought it.

Coffin Place.—Deacon John Hunt owned this farm for many years, for Mother Hapgood said (Molly Hunt, daughter of Deacon J. Hunt) when she was very small she remembered the 19th of April, and looked out of the window and saw James Hayward walking along as fast he could, with gun in his hand. He seemed to be in a great hurry. It was the morning of the day he was killed in Lexington. Jotham Hunt, son of Deacon J. Hunt, became owner of the place, lived there many years, then sold it to Porter Reed. Afterwards it was owned by George Coffin.

James Hayward's Place.—Samuel Hosmer, brother of Deacon Silas Hosmer, built that house, occupying it several years. Some other families lived there before Mr. Hayward bought it. There was a Mr. Hayward, the father of Jonas Hayward, who died when he was a young man. Samuel Hayward owned the farm that William Reed owned and lived there during his life. It was the plaee that Joseph Cole carried on several years and died there two or three years ago.

James W. Wheeler Place.—The old house that stood near that elm-tree was owned by Samuel Wheeler. His son Nathan succeeded him and still occupied the old house during his life. James W. Wheeler, his son, after a few years bought the farm and built a new house, owned by Oetavius Knowlton.

Elisha Cutler Place.—Deacon John Wheeler, brother of Samuel Wheeler, owned this farm, living there during his life. Joel Whitcomb owned it awhile.

Simon Hunt was a brother of Deacon John Hunt, and his home was what was called the Bright Place, the next house beyond the late Cyrus Hayward's place as you go towards Stowe.

A. & O. W. Mead & Co.—The history of this firm has such relations to Aeton that a brief account of its record is here given.

O. W. Mead was born in Boxboro' Oet. 19, 1824. Worked on his father's farm until he was twenty-one years of age. His education was limited to the district school until of age. He afterwards attended academy in Lunenburg three terms, and taught school in Lunenburg and Littleton, one term each.

At twenty-three years of age he went into the marketing business with his brother Adelbert, and drove a horse team to Boston weekly with all kinds of produce.

He moved to West Acton in 1840, and there continued his business with his brother successfully, transporting their freight over the Fitchburg Railroad to Boston. In 1867 his brother Adelbert, Varnum B. and himself leased store No. 35, on North Market St., and carried on the produce business under the name of A. & O. W. Mead & Co. Their business has been varied and extensive to the present time.

Their lumbering interests in New Hampshire and Maine have been large, in cattle and lands in Iowa, Minnesota and Territories considerable.

They built in West Aeton the first refrigerator for storing fruit—in this country—which proved very remunerative for many years.

The first house has been supplanted by several larger and more costly buildings.

The firm has expended large sums of money in West Acton in buildings and otherwise, which has done much towards the adornment and general pros-

perity of the village, and have always taken a lively interest in the welfare of the town of their adoption.

O. W. Mead was an active director in the American Powder-Mill for twenty years, has been intrusted with the settlement of several estates, three years a director in the Florida Midland Railroad, been one of the directors of the Board of Commerce, is now a director of the First National Bank of Ayer, one of the trustees of the North Middlesex Savings Bank, also president and manager of one of the largest herds of cattle in the Territory of Wyoming.

The business of this firm extends into millions yearly.

Their father's name was Nathaniel; their grandfather Deacon Oliver Mead. Their mother was Lucy Taylor, daughter of Capt. Oliver Taylor.

Luke Blanchard—He was born in Boxboro' Jan. 17, 1826, and lived there until he was twenty-four years of age.

He was the son of Simon, and moved into Acton in 1852. He married Jerusha M. Vose April 8, 1858, and had the following children: Mary Florence, born Aug. 8, 1859, died in two years and four months; Anna Maria, born Oct. 7, 1862; Arthur F., born Jan. 21, 1864; Mary Alice, born Dec. 21, 1867, died Feb. 2, 1889.

He has been a prosperous business man, accumulating successfully through his own exertions. His business has been largely marketing and trading. His property is distributed in several towns, but his chief local interest has been for several years in West Acton.

He is grandson of Calvin Blanchard, who was at Bunker Hill, and helped build the breastworks preparatory to the fight, and was at the Concord fight April 19th.

He is the grandnephew of Luther Blanchard, who was the fifer at the Concord fight—in Capt. Davis' company—and a brother to Simon, grandson of Calvin.

HISTORICAL MAP OF ACTON.[1]—Old road from Capt. Davis' house to 1st Meeting-House:

Capt. Isaac Davis, 1775; Joseph Brown, 1813; Ward S. Haskell, Nathaniel G. Brown, 1825; Charles H. Wheeler.

Rev. John Swift, 1740; Dea. Josiah Noyes, 1780; David Barnard, Esq., 1800; Joash Keyes, Eliab Grimes, Jonathan W. Teele, Dea. W. W. Davis.

Captain Phineas Osgood, 1744; Edward Harrington, 1800; Thomas F. Lawrence, 1872; Rev. James T. Woodbury, Capt. Daniel Tuttle.

The old Parsonage:

Josiah Piper, 1735; Rev. Moses Adams, 1819; Rev. Marshall Shedd, 1831; Isaac Bullard.

The old School-House north of the Parsonage, 1798:

The Centre Village.—Edward Tuttle, Joseph W. Tuttle, Charles Tuttle, Dea. Joseph Brabrook.

First Store.—Dea. John and James Fletcher, his brother, Rev. James Fletcher, Memorial Library.

Peter Goodnow, M. D., Hon. Stevens Hayward, Mrs. Elizabeth Blood, Benjamin Wilde, Jr., Timothy Hartwell, Silas Jones.

[1] By Horace F. Tuttle.

Store.—Stephen Weston, John F. Davis.

James Jones, Widow Leighton, Dea. John Fletcher, Cyrus Dole, Henry M. Smith, John E. Cutter.

Samuel Chaffin, Jerusha Noyes, Elizabeth Brooks, T. Frederic Noyes.

Hotel—Lieut. Henry Durant, 1808; Silas Jones, 1822; Horace Tuttle, 1835; Daniel Tuttle, 1840; John E. Cutter.

Samuel Jones, Esq., Doctor Abram Young, Simon Davis, Widow Harriet Davis.

Store—Dea. John and James Fletcher; Shoe Manufactory, John Fletcher and Sons.

First Meeting-house, 1736; School-house, 1771.

Brooks Tavern, Daniel Brooks, 1762; Paul Brooks, James Fletcher, Jr., Nathaniel Stearns.

James Fletcher, 1794, Dea. John's father, Abel Proctor, Silas Conant.

Jones Turnpike.—Laid out in 1817.

Widow Hannah Leighton, Samuel Jones, Esq., James Conant.
Jonas Blodgett, Frank Hosmer.
Theodore Reed, Horace Tuttle, Dea. William D. Tuttle.
William Reed (3d), Joseph Reed.

The new road through the Centre. Laid out in 1806.

John Cragin.
Allen Richardson, 1826; Charles F. Richardson, Al. Robbins.

The road over the Strawberry Hill, 1735. Bounds renewed 1803, and road straightened 1807, over the brook.

The road from Littleton line—Nashoba Corner, called Proctor's Road, 1746—leading to Cemetery, and crossing Harvard Turnpike at Daniel McCarthy's, 1735, and on to Joel Conant and so. east Acton.

Cotton Proctor, Peter Fletcher, Oliver Wetherbee, John Grimes.
Magog Hill.
Jonas Allen, 1762; Simon Tuttle, 1762; Francis Tuttle, Town of Acton.
Simon Tuttle; Jr., 1828.
Charles Handley, 1827.

School, 1787, at the crossing leading to Mr. Hammond's, burnt 1795.

Dr. Abraham Skinner, Charles Tuttle.
Rocky Guzzle.
Woodlawn Cemetery, 1736.
Daniel F. Barker, 1809; Dea. Samuel Hosmer, 1839.
Joseph Barker, 1762–1809; Lieut. Reuben Barker, Joseph W. Wheeler.
Abner Wheeler, Capt. Silas Jones, Daniel McCarthy.
Daniel Shepherd, 1735; John Cole, 1800; Alvin Raymond, Jedidiah Tuttle.
Joseph Cole, 1800; George B. Cole, William Hosmer.

The Stow and Carlisle road, 1735–1803.

Capt. Samuel Davis, 1735; John Adams, Jr., 1770; Ebenezer Barker, 1807; Jonathan Barker, 1847; Cyrus Barker.
S. E. School, 1771; Forge, 1766.

County road from Mill Corner to Assabet River and Faulkner Mills, 1776.

Joseph Dudley, 1793; Reuben Barker, William S. Jones.
Josiah Hayward, 1735; Simeon Hayward, 1792; Mrs. Mary Skinner Hayward's Mills.
Towards Faulkner's Mills.
Lieut. John Adams, 1750; Moses Fletcher, 1826; Peter Fletcher, Lemuel Dole, Frank Pratt.
Dea. Joseph Fletcher, 1735; Capt. Daniel Fletcher, 1776; Stephen Shepherd, Benjamin Wilde, 1797–1822; Asa Parker, 1825; Frank D Barker, 1885.
Reuben Hosmer, 1800; Joseph Wilde, 1825; William A. Wilde.
Charles Robbins.
Capt. John Hayward, 1775; John S. Fletcher, Daniel Fletcher.
Benjamin Robbins, 1820; John Fletcher, 1845.

County road leading from Faulkner's Mills to S. E. Acton Mills.

Ammiruhamma Faulkner, before 1735, Francis Faulkner, Francis Faulkner, Jr., Winthrop Faulkner, Col. Winthrop E. Faulkner.

Road to Maynard, 1847.

Road to Store from Mill Corner, 1736.

Joseph W. Tuttle, Capt. Aaron C. Handley.
Moses Hayward, Cyrus Hayward.
David Forbush, 1735; David Forbush, Jr., 1771; Ephraim Forbush, Abel Forbush, Isaiah Reed.

Road to Store from Mill Corner.

John S. Fletcher Cross road.

Cyrus Putnam, 1829.
Simon Hunt, 1731; Capt. Simon Hunt, Jr., 1775.
Josiah Bright.
Nathan Robbins, 1736; George Robbins, 1775; George Robbins, Jr., 1826.

Sumner Blood Cross road.

Tilly Robbins.
Tilly Robbins, Jr.

Road from Mill Corner and Stow to Concord School.

Jonathan Tower.
Ezra Wheeler, 1762; Lewis Wood, 1828; Mrs. C. D. Lothrop.
Samuel Handley, 1807; Joseph Brown, 1820; Elijah Brown.
Daniel Brooks, 1776; Dea. John Brooks, 1735; Jonas Brooks, Esq., 1776; Nathan Wright, Obed Symonds.
Titus Law, 1735; Joel Conant, 1823; John Conant, H. Hanson.
John and Stephen and Amos Laws, 1735; Abel Cole, 1890.
Asae Hosmer, Dea. Samuel Hosmer, Nathaniel Jones, Doctor Warner.

Road from the Laws to Silas Holden's, 1770.

Road from Stow and Concord Road to Harvard Turnpike, 1833.

Joel Hosmer, Jonathan Hosmer, Nat. Thurston Law.
Josiah Piper, 1825.
Joseph Piper, 1774; Joseph Piper, Jr., Silas Piper, Jonathan Piper, Abel Farrar.

Road from Harvard Turnpike to Moses Taylor, Esq.'s, site, 1797.

Road from Moses Taylor, Esq. to Centre, 1774.

Joseph Barker, 1762; Moses Richardson, 1800; Silas Taylor, 1822; Moses Taylor, Esq.
John Barker, 1736; Thad. Tuttle, 1797.

Road from Mill Corner to the Centre, way to meeting, 1735.

Store, Samuel Jones, 1735; Samuel Jones, Jr., Aaron Jones, 1776; Elnathan Jones.
Capt. Abel Jones, Abraham H. Jones.
Universalist Church.
Simon Hunt, School, 1771.
William Cutting, 1735; William Cutting, Jr., 1808; Luther B. Jones, 1826.

Cross road to the West road.

Dea. Jonathan Hosmer, 1735; Stephen Hosmer, 1765; Abner Hosmer, born 1754; Nathan D. Hosmer, 1800; Aaron Hosmer, Herman A. Gould.
Simon Hosmer, Jr., Reuben L. Reed, John Kelly.
Jonathan Hosmer, 1760; Simon Hosmer, Esq., 1800; Francis Tuttle, Esq., Edward O'Neill.

County road along the brook from Mill Corner to the Stow and Carlisle road, 1847.

Road from Universalist church, Mill Corner to beyond the Ford Pond brook crossing near Mt. Hope Cemetery—before 1735.

Jacob Woods, 1735; Oliver Jones, 1771; Abraham Conant, Esq., Winthrop F. Conant.
Simon Hunt's new house, 1735; John Hunt, 1765; Jotham Hunt, 1826; Joseph P. Read, George Coffin.
James Faulkner, Aaron Faulkner, 1800; Andrew Wilson, 1826; Daniel Wetherbee, John Hapgood.
Mount Hope Cemetery.

County road from Mt. Hope Cemetery to store in West Acton, 1766.

Universalist Church.
Baptist Church.
Store, School.

Farr's road to Meeting in 1735, coming from Stow to West Acton.

Stephen Farr, 1740; Oliver Houghton, Levi Houghton.
Thomas Farr's, 1735; Nathaniel Faulkner, 1764; Nathaniel Faulkner, Jr., Nathaniel S. Faulkner, Frank H. Whitcomb.
Capt. Samuel Hayward, 1735; James Hayward, born 1750; Capt. Stevens Hayward, Hon. Stevens Hayward, Orlando Leland.
Ezekiel Davis, Capt. Isaac Davis, born 1745; Elias Chaffin, Jonathan B. Davis, George Hagar.

Capt. Samuel Hayward's way to Meeting, 1735–1800.

Hezekiah Wheeler, 1735; Samuel Wheeler, 1775–1797; Nathan Wheeler, James W. Wheeler.
Joseph Wheeler, Dea. John Wheeler, Elisha H. Cutler.

Road laid out 1762—a short line.

William Reed, Joseph Reed.

Road from Store in West Acton to Littleton, 1760.

Bradbury Stone.
John Tuttle, 1800; Reuben Handley, Jacob Priest.
Timothy Brooks, William Reed, William Reed (2d), Isaac Reed.
David Brooks, 1735; Joseph Brooks, 1780; Silas Brooks, Ephraim Hapgood, 1810; Ephraim Hapgood, Jr., Andrew Hapgood.
Nathaniel Hapgood, 1800.
Nathaniel Wheeler, 1762; Roger Wheeler, Eben Smith, Edwin Parker.
Abraham Hapgood, 1775; James Hapgood, Simon Blanchard.
Cyrus Hapgood, Benjamin F. Hapgood, John Hapgood, Ephraim Hapgood, Jr., Ephraim Hapgood, 1760.

Nashoba road from West Acton.

Judge Gilbert, 1775; James Keyes, Ivory Keyes, 1845; Nahum Littlefield.

From Nashoba to the Gravel-pit road, 1753.

John Chaffin, 1762; John Chaffin, Jr., Antoine Bulette, 1829.
Robert Chaffin, 1762; Robert Chaffin, Jr., 1829; A. Risso.
Lieut. Thomas Noyes, 1753; Capt. Joseph Noyes, 1808; Thomas J. Noyes, 1829; Alonzo L. Tuttle.

Gravel-pit road—County, 1846.

John Chaffin's road to Meeting in 1753.

James Fletcher, 1791; Potter Conant, 1795; Paul Conant, Samuel P. Conant, 1808; Benjamin Robbins, Phineas Harrington, Simon Robbins.
Samuel Parlin, 1776; Davis Parlin, Jonathan Parlin, Thomas Hammond.

Off from the Harvard turnpike in coming from West Acton.

Samuel Hosmer, 1795; Dea. Silas Hosmer, 1812; Frank W. Knowlton.

The road leading from Stow to Concord before 1735.

Dea. Benjamin Hayward, Aaron Hayward, Lowell Wood, Albert A. Haynes.

Nagog Pond.

Captain Daniel White, J. K. Putney.
Dea. John White.
David Lamson, 1762, in from road.

Joseph Chamberlain, in from road.
Frederic Rouillard.
Solomon Dutton.
John Handley, David Handley.
Joseph Robbins. 1774; John Dinsmore Robbins, James Keyes, George R. Keyes.
Capt. John Handley, 1830; John Rouillard.
Eben Robbins, Abraham Handley, Henry Loker.
Thomas Blanchard.
Charles Robbins.
Joseph Chaffin, 1797; Jonathan Wheeler.
Amos Noyes, Luther Davis.
Reuben Wheeler.
Joel Oliver, Ephraim Oliver.
Mark White (2d), William Stearns, Robert P. Boss, Ephraim Davis.
David Davis, Calvin Hayward, Solomon Smith, Samuel Tuttle, 1800; Horace Hosmer.
William Billings, Henry Brooks.
Aaron Chaffin, Silas Conant.
School.
Edward Wetherbee, Jonathan Billings, James E. Billings, Otis H. Forbush.
James Billings, 1775; James Hapgood, Isaiah Perkins.
John Robbins, 1800; Elbridge Robbins.
Joseph Wooley, 1735.
Joseph Harris, 1735; Joseph Harris, Jr., 1735; Daniel Harris.
John Barker, Jr., 1735.
Edward Wetherbee, 1775; Edward Wetherbee, Jr.
Elbridge J. Robbins.
Grist mill.
Daniel Wetherbee.

Road leading from Edward Wetherbee's across the brook, south of the saw-mill, 1749.

Forge before 1735.
Capt. Joseph Robbins, 1775.

In from the road near the rivulet, south of Joseph Robbins.

Capt. Thomas Wheeler, 1668.
Nathan Robbins, before 1735.

Road from Daniel Wetherbee's to Silas Holden's place, on the Harvard Turnpike, 1865.

Samuel Wright, 1751; Samuel Wright, Jr., 1812; Silas Holden, 1823; Pope & Lyman.

New road over Strawberry Hill.

Solomon Burges, John Whitney.
Mark White, 1735; Samuel White, 1756; Simon Hapgood, Benjamin F. Hapgood.

Road to Concord, from Strawberry Hill, 1735.

Jonathan Cleaveland, 1735.
Reuben Wheeler, 1800; William Wheeler.
Addison Wheeler.
Col. Nathanial Edwards, 1750; John Edwards, Daniel McCarthy.
John Davis, 1735; Capt. Samuel Davis, 1763; Paul Dudley.

Branch from Littleton road.

Lieut. Jonathan Billings, 1735; Jonathan Billings, 1762; Paul Dudley, 1808; Calvin Harris.
Ephraim Billings, 1775; Darius Billings, Joseph Estabrook.
Israel Giles.

Old road to Concord, 1735.

Benjamin Brabrook, 1735; House built, 1751; Benjamin Brabrook, 1770; George Brabrook, Hammond Taylor, 1890.

Near Concord line, 1735.

Seth Brooks, 1797; Nathan Brooks, Nathan Brooks, Jr., Wilber G. Davis, 1887.

The old road to Littleton in 1735.

Abram B. Handley.
Capt. Daniel Davis, Ebenezer Davis, Ebenezer Davis, Jr., Amasa Davis, William Davis.
Ebenezer Davis, William B. Davis.

The road from Acton Centre to Carlisle, 1735–1803.

Amos Handley, 1800.
Jonas Davis, Abel Conant, Luther Conant, Luther Conant, Jr., Esq. George W. Tuttle, 1800.

Old road from Acton to Carlisle.

Joseph Chaffin, 1784; Jonathan Wheeler.
Thomas Thorp, 1775; Nathan Chaffin.
Thomas Wheeler, 1735; Nehemiah's Hill.
Jerry Hosmer, 1824.
James Harris, 1829.
Uriah Foster, Hugh Cash, Ebenezer Wood.
John Harris, 1769; John Harris, Jr., 1808; George H. Harris, 1889.
Moses Woods, 1800; Aaron Woods.
Cyrus Wheeler, 1844.
James Davis, 1800; Ebenezer Hayward.
Samuel Wheeler, 1735; Gershom Davis, 1740; John Hayward, Jr., Daniel Davis' Mill, 1775; Lieut. Phineas Wheeler, Francis Robbins.
Elijah Davis, 1776.
Jonathan Davis, 1800.

Old East Cemetery before 1735.

School, Dea. John Heald, 1735; Lieut. John Heald, 1762; Timothy Brown, 1800; John Nickles.

John Davis's Mill, 1735, on Charles Tuttle's brook.

Daniel White's Mill on the Nagog brook below Abel Robbin's house, south of Thomas Moore.

The Davis Monument—The citizens of Acton believing that the name of Captain Isaac Davis, the first officer who fell in the struggle for independence, and also the names of his two brave townsmen, Abner Hosmer and James Hayward—one of whom fell by his side on the famous 19th of April, 1775, at the old North Bridge in Concord, and the other in the pursuit at Lexington on the same day—were deserving of a better fame than history had usually awarded them, and a more commanding and enduring structure than ordinary slabs of slate to tell the story of their martyrdom and mark the spot where their dust reposes, passed the following vote at a large town-meeting holden on the 11th November A.D. 1850.

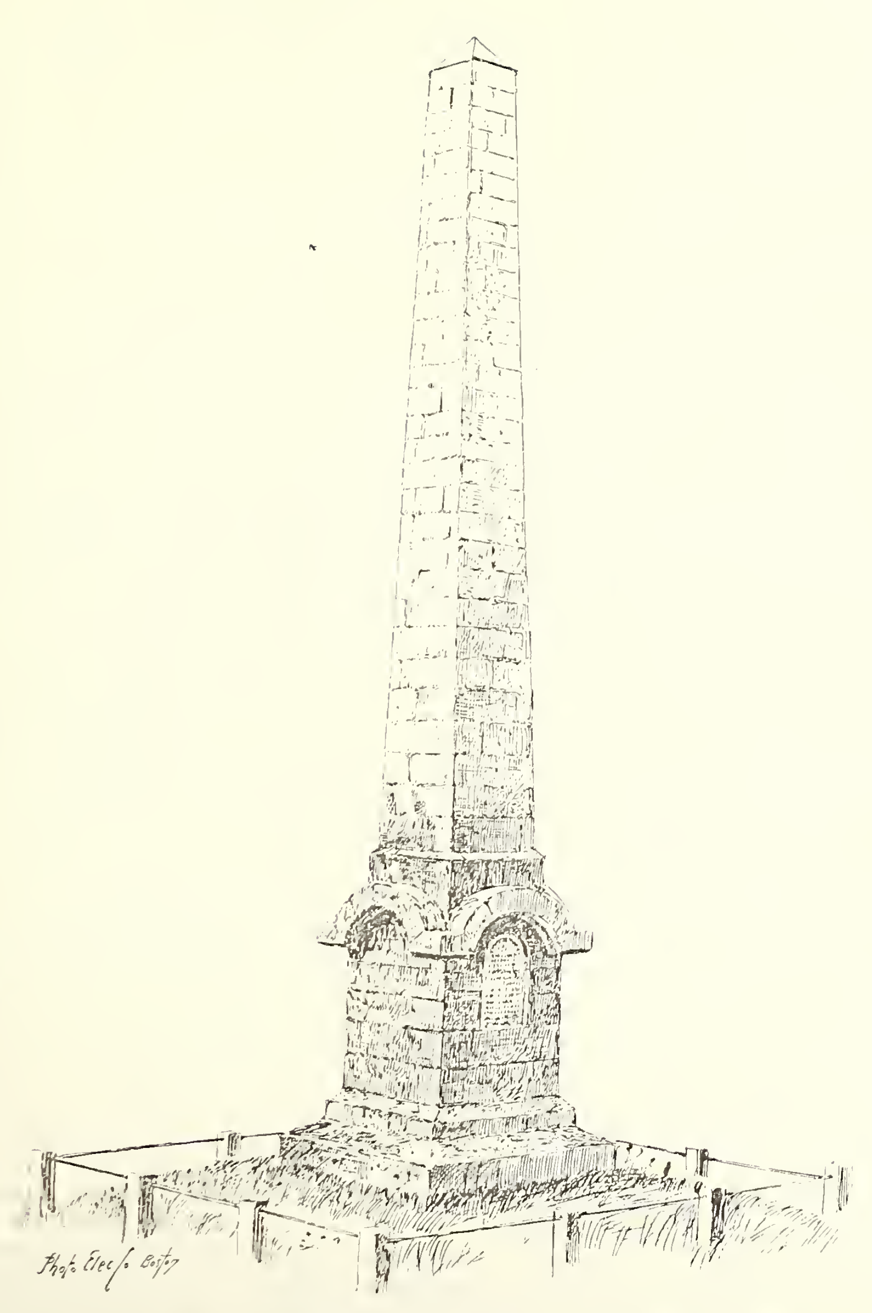
"*Voted*, That the town of Acton erect a monument over Captain Isaac Davis, Hosmer and Hayward, and that their remains be taken up and put in some suitable place on Acton Common, if the friends of said Davis, Hosmer and Hayward are willing, and that the Selectmen and the three ministers in the town be a Committee to lay out what they shall think proper or petition Congress and the State Legislature for aid in erecting said monument."

A petition for this object was presented to the Legislature early in the session by Rev. J. T. Woodbury.

The committee consisted of Ivory Keyes, Luther Conant, James Tuttle, selectmen; James T. Woodbury, Robert Stinson, Horace Richardson, ministers, in behalf of the town.

The joint committee of the Legislature or the Militia to whom this petition was referred, unanimously submitted a report in favor of the project. The matter was fully discussed, and after the eloquent address and appeal of Mr. Woodbury, the resolve was passed by a large majority.

Two thousand dollars were appropriated, to be joined by an appropriation of five hundred dollars by the



DAVIS MONUMENT.



town of Acton, to be expended under the direction of the Governor, George S. Boutwell, and a joint committee of the town.

There was a difference of choice by the committee as to where on the Common the monument should stand. The decision was finally left with the Governor, who decided upon the present site, a spot not suggested by any one before, but which all agreed was just the place for it as soon as mentioned by the Governor.

Another question decided, was whether it should be made of rough or hewn granite. "Let it be of God's own granite," said Mr. Woodbury, "and let it be from the Acton quarry nearest to the site." Most of the granite was taken from the hill in the rear of Mr. Woodbury's residence, less than a mile from the Common to the north, and given by him for the purpose.

The model finally approved by the committee has been universally admired for its beauty, simplicity and impressiveness. It is seventy-five feet high; the top is four feet four inches square; a square shaft, reaching upward from a finely-proportioned arch on each side at its base. The base is fifteen feet wide, and extends eight feet into the earth, and is of good, split, heavy blocks of granite. Through the centre of the cap-stone projects upward a wooden flag-staff, twenty-five feet in length, from the top of which a flag is kept floating, at the expense of the town, on all public days of patriotic import.

In a panel on the side facing the main avenue the inscription reads as follows:

"The Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the town of Acton, co-operating to perpetuate the fame of their glorious deeds of patriotism, have erected this monument in honor of Capt. Isaac Davis and privates Abner Hosmer and James Hayward, citizen soldiers of Acton and Provincial Minute-men, who fell in Concord Fight, the 19th day of April, A.D. 1775.

"On the morning of that eventful day the Provincial officers held a council of war near the old North Bridge in Concord: and as they separated, Davis exclaimed, 'I haven't a man that is afraid to go!' and immediately marched his company from the left to the right of the line, and led in the first organized attack upon the troops of George III. in that memorable war, which, by the help of God, made the thirteen colonies independent of Great Britain and gave political being to the United States of America.

"Acton, April 19, 1851."

The old gravestones, which stood for seventy-five years to mark the resting-place of the three patriots in Woodlawn Cemetery, have been laid on the sides of the mound at the base of the monument. They are very ancient in appearance, and bear the following interesting inscriptions:

"MEMENTI MORO.

"Here lies the body of Mr. Abner Hosmer, who was killed at Concord April 19th 1775, in ye defence of ye just rights of his country, being in the twenty-first year of his age."

Hayward's is even more interesting, containing, in addition, this poetry:

"This monument may unborn ages tell
How brave young Hayward like a hero fell,
When fighting for his countries liberty
Was slain, and here his body now doth lye—
He and his foe were by each other slain,
His victim's blood with his ye earth did stain.

Upon ye field he was with victory crowned,
And yet must yield his breath upon that ground.
He expressed his hope in God before his death,
After his foe had yielded up his breath.
Oh, may his death a lasting witness lye
Against oppressor's bloody cruelty."

This contains the story of his death. After the defeat of the British he stopped at a pump to drink, when a British officer, who came out of the house, exclaimed, "You're a dead man!" Both aimed, fired, and both fell mortally wounded, the officer dying a few seconds before young Hayward. The powder-horn worn by Hayward was pierced with the ball, and is now preserved, having been silver-mounted by Edward Everett.

The third stone is that of Captain Davis, which is headed, "I say unto all, watch!" and then, after a record of his death, this is added: "Is there not an appointed time to man upon ye earth? Are not his days also like the days of an hireling? As the cloud vanisheth away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more. He shall return no more to his house; neither shall his place know him any more! Job 7: 1, 9, 10."

The dedication of this monument was a day to be remembered by every loyal citizen of the town; indeed, by every one present true to the flag of the Union. It occurred October 29, 1851. The monument was surmounted by the stars and stripes, and from each side of the apex was extended a line of streamers and flags. Across the principal streets were also lines of flags, which were tastefully grouped and arranged by Mr. Yale, of Boston.

The day was cloudy and lowering, but still favorable for the ceremonies—no rain falling until they were all concluded.

The attendance of the citizens of the surrounding towns was quite large. Five thousand persons were judged to be present, mostly the hardy and intelligent yeomanry of Old Middlesex, and their wives and daughters.

The ceremonies of the day consisted of a procession, an oration by His Excellency, Gov. Boutwell, a poem by Rev. J. Pierpont, of Medford, and a dinner, which was succeeded by speeches from several distinguished gentlemen, among whom were Robert C. Winthrop, of Boston, Hon. B. Thompson, of Charlestown, Col. Isaac H. Wright, of Lexington, and Hon. Charles Hudson, of Lexington. A thousand plates were set for the dinner, under a mammoth tent, erected by Mr. Yale, of Boston, a few rods to the north of the monument.

The procession was formed on the Green about

noon. The military escort, which made a fine appearance, was under command of Col. James Jones, of the First Artillery, with Major I. S. Keyes and Adjutant E. C. Wetherbee as staff. The following companies composed the battalion: The Concord Artillery, Capt. James B. Wood, accompanied by Flagg's Boston Brass Band; the Prescott Guards, of Pepperell, under command of Alden Lawrence, first lieutenant; the Sudbury Rifles, Captain Ephraim Morse.

Following the escort was the civic procession, under command of Col. W. E. Faulkner, as chief marshal, assisted by Ed. W. Harrington, A. L. Hutchinson, Simon Davis, Henderson Rowell, Henry Brooks, George G. Parker, A. J. Clough and H. L. Neal, mounted aids, and Messrs. L. Gilman, Marshall Parker, V. Lintell and Lowell Stearns, on foot to escort the ladies; the Governor and aides, consisting of Colonels Heard, Chapman, Williams and Needham; the President of the Massachusetts Senate, invited guests, the president, vice-presidents and committee of arrangements of the various towns, composed the second division. The third division embraced No. 1 Division of the Order of United Americans, and the "O'Kommakamesit" Fire Company, No. 2, of Marlboro'. The fourth and fifth divisions were composed of citizens from Lexington, Concord, Littleton, Boxboro', Sudbury, Westford, Stow and Acton. Several of these towns carried appropriate banners. That from Lexington was a large, white banner with a red fringe. On the front was the inscription, "Lexington, April 19, 1775. O, what a glorious day for America!" On the reverse—"Freedom's Offering!" and the names of Parker and other patriots who fell in the fight at Lexington.

From the Green the procession proceeded towards the Old Burying-ground, southeast part of the town, where the remains of the patriots Davis, Hosmer and Hayward were deposited, awaiting their removal to the monument.

The bones, which were disinterred some days before, were nearly entire, and were enclosed in an oblong, black walnut box, highly polished and studded with silver nails. The remains were enclosed in different compartments, each marked upon the cover by a silver plate bearing the name of the old patriots. The cheek-bone of Hosmer showed the trace of the ball which caused his death, entering just below the left eye and coming out at the back of the neck.

The box was placed in a hearse, and under the escort of the "Davis Guards," First Lieutenant Daniel Jones in command, met the procession at the junction of the two roads leading to town. Here both parties halted—the military escort in open order, and with arms presented awaited the approach of the sacred remains—the Lowell Band, which accompanied them, playing a beautiful dirge, composed by Kurick. Flagg's Brass Band, which accompanied the escort, then performed the dirge, "Peace, troubled;" after which the escort fell into position and the procession, including the remains, proceeded to the monument. Eight venerable citizens of Acton, all of them over seventy years of age, appeared as pall-bearers. They were: Joseph Harris, Dr. Charles Tuttle, each eighty-two years old; Nathan D. Hosmer (nephew of Abner), eighty; John Harris, Daniel Barker and James Keyes, each seventy-six years; Jonathan Barker, seventy-four; and Lemuel Hildreth, seventy. The hearse was driven by John Tenney.

Upon arriving at the monument the box containing the remains was placed upon a stand in the street, which was covered with a black velvet pall. The box was opened and an opportunity given to all who wished to look upon the remains. The box was then closed and deposited in the monument in the place designed for it. The procession was then again formed and proceeded to the tent, under which the remaining scenes of the day were to take place.

The tent was hung around with streamers festooned and in the centre was the beautiful flag which had recently been presented by the ladies of Acton to the "Davis Guards." The tent was reached about one o'clock. Rev. J. T. Woodbury, president of the day, called upon Rev. Mr. Frost, of Concord, to invoke a blessing on the table and the day. An original hymn composed by Rev. Henry Durant, of Byfield, a native of Acton, was sung to the tune of "Hamburg." The first and sixth of the seven stanzas are here given

"O God, we give the praise to Thee,
The honor of our nation's birth;
It was Thy power that made us free—
The power that guides the rolling earth.
As on this pile, beneath *those* skies,
The peaceful light of heaven shall play,
So the Heroic Past shall rise
And meet the glories of that day."

The oration, poem and speeches then followed, which were eloquent and stirring with patriotic sentiment and fully appreciated by the responsive crowds in attendance.

The closing words of Governor Boutwell.—"To-day the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the town of Acton dedicate this monument to the memory of the early martyrs of the Revolution and consecrate it to the principles of liberty and patriotism.

"Here its base shall rest and its apex point to the heavens through the coming centuries. Though it bears the names of humble men and commemorates services stern rather than brilliant, it shall be as immortal as American history.

"The ground on which it stands shall be made classical by the deeds which it commemorates, and may this monument exist only with the existence of the republic: and when God, in His wisdom, shall bring this government to nought, as all human governments must come to nought, may no stone remain to *point* the inquirer to fields of valor, or to remind him of deeds of glory.

"And finally may the republic resemble the sun in his daily circuit, so that none shall know whether its path were more glorious in the rising or in the setting."

Judge Hoar's sentiment (of Concord).—"The memory of Davis and Hosmer and their brave companions in arms: The men who *fell* at the Old North Bridge, of Concord, and the men who *avenged* their fall: the first who *received* the enemy's fire, and the first officer who *returned* it. One in purpose, one in patriotism: separated by the fortunes of that day—united forever in the gratitude and admiration of their countrymen."

Rev. Mr. Pierpont, the poet, gave this as his sentiment, alluding to the slight interruption by the noise of knives and forks near the close of his poem, and saying that, having pitted his tongue against a bullock's, and been most terribly worsted, a speech could not be expected of him.

"Let Poets learn at dinner to be brief,
Else will their tongues be beaten by the beef."

Daniel Webster's sentiment, forwarded from Marshfield.—"Isaac Davis: an early grave in the cause of liberty has secured to him the long and grateful remembrance of his country."

The Davis Monument was honored by a visit of the State Military Camp, of Concord, under the command of General Benjamin F. Butler, in the fall of 1870. The noon hour in camp was a scene of bustle in preparation for the afternoon march to Acton. While dinner was yet in a state of service at division quarters, the drums of the First Brigade were heard in the far distance to the right and the long line was marked by its dust, wending its way by a circuitous route to the review field. In half an hour the other brigades were on the march and at quarter of two o'clock five thousand men were in line. The infantry were on the right and centre, and the whole artillery and cavalry were massed on the right.

Promptly at two o'clock General Butler, mounted on a white horse, and with his full staff, took his place at the head of the division and rode out at the north corner on the Concord Road. He wore no plume. The marching column was about a mile and a quarter in length. The road from Concord to Acton was largely the same as the Acton troops took in the Revolution, the division marching in column of fours. At frequent intervals groups of men, women and children were gathered to witness the pageant.

The head of the column reached Acton at ten minutes after four o'clock. The selectmen, W. W. Davis, Elbridge J. Robbins, Jr., and Charles Robinson, with a committee of citizens and ladies, headed by John Fletcher, Jr., had made ample preparations to welcome the troops. Houses were decorated and barrels upon barrels of lemonade and apples had been got ready.

The monument was elegantly decorated and also the town hall adjacent. The streets were crowded with people in holiday attire. W. W. Davis, chairman of the Board of Selectmen, addressed General Butler in an eloquent and earnest manner. The general responded: "In behalf of the soldiers of Massachusetts gathered here in your good old town, I thank you for your earnest welcome and for your offered hospitality. It seems most pleasant to us to find so beautiful a resting-place after our long and weary march. You have referred to the services of the militia in the late war, and you will allow me to say that the character and conduct of Co. E, of Acton, evidenced that the spirit of the Revolutionary sires has not died out of the good town of Acton.

"You have the honor of having erected the third monument of the War of the Revolution, and of having suffered among the first in that struggle. You have earned the right to say that the sons will, by deed and work, keep green the memories of this historic spot. You and they have made a noble record, and, as it has been in the past, so may it be in the future.

"I doubt not that the sight of this monument, and the thought that we stand on the ground made sacred by the ashes of heroes, will be of value to the Military of Massachusetts, in increasing in their bosoms the holier emotions of patriotism, and inspire them to be able defenders of the institution for which Davis, and Hosmer and Hayward fell.

"We rejoice that we are able to be here and thank you again for the welcome and the bounty with which you greet us. We propose to close our response by a salute of thirteen guns, which will be fired by one of our light batteries, as a further tribute of respect and affection for the men of Acton living and dead." The event was a lively one, and a feature of the week that will long be remembered by those who participated in it, and by those who witnessed it.

The War of 1812.—The War of 1812 was not popular in this part of the country, but in the beginning of the war several men were enlisted in the army. In 1814 the military company called the Davis Blues was ordered into service as a body and was despatched to Boston to assist in the defence of that place against a possible attack. Hon. John C. Park, of Boston, a native of Acton, and a grandson of Rev. Moses Adams, thus writes, describing the event:

"I well remember the commotion in Acton on the day when the Blues met to take up their march to Boston. We boys were wild with excitement, but when the large doors of the meeting-house were thrown open and it was understood that the company would have prayers offered for them, we were sobered at once. I thought the prayer was very earnest and appropriate, and was indignant when afterwards, among the gathered knots of men in front of the porch, I heard some criticising it as being too much tinctured with the good old minister's anti-war sentiments. In a few days the fifer returned and



gave glowing accounts of their enthusiastic reception and the march of the Blues through Boston. It seems that at every street-corner the men and the boys would cheer, and the drum and fife were expected to respond with a triple roll and salute. The poor fifer was so exhausted with his untiring efforts, to pipe shrill for the honor of his corps and the town, that he was taken with spitting of blood and had to return home. This I believe was the only blood shed during the campaign."

The enemy kept away from Boston, otherwise the "Davis Blues" might have patterned after the style of the Davis minute-men thirty-nine years before at Concord. John Fletcher, afterwards captain of the company, was then clerk and went to Boston as clerk. Silas Jones, the son of Aaron Jones, was the captain. His company was the first to report at headquarters (after receiving the orders) of any in the regiment. Three times since the existence of the nation a company from Acton has been summoned at the outbreak of war,—the Revolution, the War of 1812 and the War of the Rebellion—and in each case has been the first to appear on duty.

A list of Acton Davis Blues who went to South Boston in the War of 1812, whose names have been copied from the original-pay roll, in the handwriting of the clerk of the company, Deacon John Fletcher, now in possession of Deacon Samuel Hosmer:

Captain, Silas Jones, son of Aaron Jones; 1st Lieutenant, James Jones; 2d Lieutenant, Aaron Hayward; Ensign, Jonathan Hosmer, Jr.; Clerk, John Fletcher; Samuel Conant, John Hendley, Silas Piper, Jr., fifer; Paul Conant, bass drum; Abner Wheeler, small drum; Luke Hayward, James Fletcher, Jr. (brother to the clerk); Jonathan B. Davis, James Hayward, Josiah H. Adams, Joseph Barker (2d), Jonathan Billings, Jr., Ephraim Billings, Josiah Bright, Jr., James Conant, Joel Conant, John Conant, John Chaffin, Joseph T. Chamberlain, Ezekiel Chamberlain, Ebenezer Davis, Luther Davis, John S. Fletcher, Abel Forbush, Silas Hosmer, Moses Hayward (shot accidentally), Nathaniel Hapgood, John Harris, James Keyes, George Robbins, Joseph Robbins, George W. Robbins, John D. Robbins, William Reed (3d), Allen Richardson, Jonathan Wheeler, Samuel Whitney, Oliver Wetherbee, Nathan P. Hosmer.

SCHOOL-HOUSES.—There was a movement in 1740, soon after the town was organized, to obtain an appropriation for school purposes, but the movement failed. At a meeting in 1741 the town voted that a reading, writing and moving school be kept for six months.

This early action in favor of a school on wheels shows that the idea is not original with the present generation.

In 1743, at a special meeting in December, the town voted £18, old tenor, for a reading and writing school and to divide the town into three parts.

This division continued until 1751, when the districts were increased to six, in 1771 another was added for a few years.

From 1790–1800 there were five districts, then four for nearly thirty years, when the present division into six districts began. When there were only four districts the inhabitants of the southeast part of the town received their school money from the town and united with certain inhabitants of Sudbury and Concord, and had a school in a house which was just across the Sudbury line. This was called the School of the Three Friends. At this time the North and East Districts were one. Previous to the organization of the town there were buildings erected for school purposes at private expense, and the schools kept according to the circumstances then existing in different localities.

The first schoolmasters were mostly residents of the town. As late as 1771 there were four school-houses which were private property. The first appropriations for schools were very small—not more than £12.

But few studies were taught and the teachers but poorly paid. The schools were called reading and writing schools, and none but the simplest rudiments of knowledge were taught before the present century.

A master in the winter received but little more per week than a day-laborer, and the teacher of a "woman's school" but little more than a servant girl.

In 1760 an order was drawn to pay a master fifteen shillings for keeping school two weeks and a half, and another drawn for his board for half that sum.

An aged resident of the town said that when she was a girl the lady teacher had one dollar per week for her services and her mother received one dollar per week for boarding her. The grant for schools was greatly supplemented by donations and subscriptions by the citizens for private schools.

For several years a private school was supported in the autumn at the Centre of the town. Rev. Asa D. Smith, D.D., late president of Dartmouth College, was one of the teachers of that school.

The town records give the following items: "October 14, 1796, it was voted that there shall be five districts in this town, and the school-houses shall be built on the same places that was agreed upon by a former vote of the town, viz.: One of the said houses to be built near Mr. John Dexter's Paster bars on the road leading from the meeting house to Dr. Abraham Skinner's.

"One on the hill West of Jonathan Tower's house.

"One on the crotch of the road West of Samuel Wheeler's house (where Mr. Cyrus Wheeler's house now stands nearly).

"One where the school house near Samuel Tuttle's now stands (in the East District, near Horace Hosmer's present residence). The other house to be built where the school-house now stands near John Harris.

"January 21st, 1797. To see if the town will agree to build a school-house to accommodate the District where the school-house was consumed by fire.

"To see if the town will agree to form themselves into a certain number of school districts and provide each District with a school-house and divide the school money into so many equal parts."

In 1797 a town-meeting was called "to see if the town will reconsider all former votes respecting building school-houses, if any there be on record, and see if the town would build a school-house in the district that had the school-house burnt." (This house that was burnt stood at the turn of the road beyond Mr. Charles Tuttle's site leading to Mr. Thomas Hammond, in the south corner).

"Voted to reconsider all former votes respecting districts for seven years past. Voted that there be a committee of five men to fix a place for a school-house in the North District to which Lieutenant Noyes belongs, and that Jonas Brooks, John Edwards, Esq., Aaron Jones, George Robbins and Edward Wetherbee be the Committee.

"Then voted fifty pounds to build said house and that said committee build such house as they think Propper for said District and the best way they can."

In November, 1798, the committee appointed by the town reported they had "attended to the service and soaled four of the oald school-houses, viz.: one by Mr. John Adams, Jr., one by Oliver Jones, one by Hezekiah Wheeler's, and one near the meeting-house. The whole of which was soaled for Fifty-five dollars and approved notes given to the Town Treasurer for the same payable within nine months from the date."

The school-house located and built by this committee, of which Jonas Brooks was chairman, was the old red school-house which stood for the next forty years a few rods north of the parsonage, then newly built, on the same side of the road. The frame of this school-house is now the substantial part of Mr. Cyrus Hale's house. It stood on rising ground facing the east. It was well built, square, with a high desk in the centre of the west side and rows of double desks rising on the north and south sides, the highest row on a level with the windows, styled the back seats, where the oldest scholars sat. This was the model for the school-houses built at that time.

It answered the purpose of a grand amphitheatre for the development of the muscle and brain of Acton's near future.

Here the Tuttles, Taylors, Joneses, Fletchers, Hosmers, Conants, Stearnses, Richardsons, Davises, Parlins, Handleys, Browns gathered for their daily tilt with themselves, their mates and their masters.

They came in groups from all parts of the district, ranging out a mile and a half and numbering in some winter terms nearly a hundred, all grades in charge of one teacher. The elements which collided and harmonized in this arena during a single day, and day after day, was a miniature picture of Acton's liveliest town-meeting.

The story of this one-school-house would fill a volume, but we have no space for the romance here,—

"Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way
With blossom'd furze, unprofitably gay,
There in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,
The village master taught his little school;
A man severe he was and stern to view—
I knew him well, and every truant knew."

By-ways and Nooks of Acton.[1]—There is a deserted farm lying to the southeast of Nagog Pond which many years ago was the home of a family named Chamberlain. The house and other buildings are now gone, but their location may be determined by the remaining well and cellars.

This place suggests the stanza in one of Miss Chandler Moulton's poems:

"The cowslips spring in the meadow,
The roses bloom on the hill
And beside the brook in the pasture
The herds go feeding at will."

It exactly answers to all the particulars. If the stanza had been written especially for this place, it could not have come nearer to reality.

There is a profusion of cowslips in the meadow, an abundance of old-fashioned damask roses on the hill near the well and a pretty brook, and almost always there are cattle pastured there.

The house, if it was still standing, would add greatly to the quaintness of the place. It is a quiet nook, away from all traces of civilization. There is an abundance of wild fruits in their season, and a rare place for boating or fishing on Nagog Pond.

In a northerly direction from Strawberry Hill is where the Indians, once inhabitants of this and the neighboring towns, used to go to manufacture their arrow-heads. They would never tell the early settlers definitely where they went, but would indicate that direction. Some years ago a hunter's dog while digging for a rabbit or a fox, cut his paws badly. His master found he had dug into a great quantity of very small sharp-edged, flint-like rocks, which, without doubt, were the remains left by the Indians from making their arrow-heads.

Probably the first settlers of South Acton were Nathan Robbins and wife, who came from East Acton and located at a site now owned by Mr. James Tuttle on the road to Stow, called the Bright's House. They started from their home beyond the cemetery in East Acton. Mr. Robbins drove the team loaded with the household goods and the wife took charge of the baby and also the family pig. In her journey she came to the big brook, which the pig would not cross. He seemed to have some premonitions of his fate and that of his descendants, should he head for that part of the country, but the woman was as resolute as the pig. She landed her most precious freight across the stream first, and then returning, pigged it over all safe, and at last reached their new home. The story is that Mrs. Robbins' and freight reached the spot first. At any rate, for some unexplained reason, the ladies in that part of the town have always been a little ahead.

The Old Chestnut-Tree.—If you have not seen that chestnut-tree don't miss the next chance. It is

[1] By Bertha H. Hosmer.

one of the original settlers of the town. Its birth record is not on town-books, but some think it is well on to two hundred years old. It was in a flourishing condition when Captain Davis and his company passed that way in 1775. It was a large tree when Simon Hapgood, father of Benjamin, was a child.

Thoreau and his sister came up from Concord to visit it before he died, and he made it twenty-two feet in circumference then. It is now more than that. The interior of the tree is hollow. The cavity is circular, sixty inches in diameter and twenty-five feet in height, through which one may look and see the sky beyond. An opening has recently been cut at the bottom and entrance can be easily made. There are worse places for a night's lodging. A good crop of chestnuts is yearly produced by its living branches. The town should get possession of this luscious tablet of the bygones and see that no ruthless axe take it too soon from the eyes of the present generation. If you wish to find it, go to the residence of Benjamin Hapgood, on Strawberry Hill, turn in from the road to the southeast from Mr. Hapgood's barn a few rods to a piece of woods, and you will easily find the venerable specimen.

GEOLOGIC SKETCH OF ACTON.[1]—Acton, unlike some of the neighboring towns, owes the principal part of its natural scenery to the irregular surface of the rock strata which form its foundation. The contour, through the action of the various atmospheric agencies, had nearly reached its present form before the glacial period, and it was but slightly modified by the action of the ice during that period. Rising to its greatest elevation near the centre of the town, the slope to the northward received the greatest force produced by the motion of the ice toward the south, which resulted in grinding down and polishing the surface of the rock and in making the slope to the north more gentle, while the slope to the south was left steep and often ragged.

The rock is a micaceous gneiss, often merging into mica schist firmly stratified, with a strike north 60° east, and a very steep dip to the northwest. This rock is a member of that crystalline series which forms the oldest portions of the earth's crust. Above this solid rock is the loose material known generally as earth—that is, the accumulation of gravel, sand, clay, loam, etc., which was brought to its present position and deposited by the agency of the ice sheet. Portions of this material were accumulated under the ice in a comparative thin layer over nearly the entire surface of the country. In certain places, however, it was built up, by a process not yet understood, into lenticular masses, with their longer axes parallel to the motion of the ice or nearly north-south. This gave rise to a prominent feature in our topography, the class of hills known as drumlins, and of which the hill just west of West Acton Village, the two south of South Acton, and Strawberry Hill, toward the northeast part of the town, are typical examples. On the surface of the ice and throughout its mass was a large amount of earth and rock, which was scattered over the surface of the country as the ice disappeared. This being in loose form, and easily acted upon by the floods produced by the melting of the glacier, was washed over and separated into distinct areas of sand, gravel and clay. These washed-over portions naturally accumulated in the lower levels, giving rise to the sand and gravel plains which extend along the courses of Nashoba and Fort Pond Brooks, and to the southeast merge into the larger areas bordering the Assabet River. Another and very peculiar feature of the washed-over material is the kame. This was formed by the small boulders and pebbles accumulating in the channels of rivers running upon the ice, and which, upon the disappearance of the ice sheet, were deposited upon the surface of the country, forming long, narrow, winding ridges of coarse gravel. A very fine example of this occurs in Acton, extending from the extreme southeast corner of the town, near the powder-mills, with occasional gaps by the cemetery near the Centre, and thence nearly parallel to and just west of Nashoba Brook, nearly to Carlisle line.

The streams which flow through the town still follow generally the valleys formed by them before the advance of the ice sheet, but in a few cases their courses have been slightly changed by the accumulations deposited by the glacier. The larger ponds occupy pre-glacial valleys; but the smaller ponds, like Grassy Pond in the north and Sinking Pond in the southeast, simply occupy small depressions in the surrounding sand plains.

THE ARTIST'S VIEW OF ACTON.[2]—The surface of Acton, like that of most Middlesex towns, is sufficiently broken and varied in its character to possess a fair share of picturesque localities. With the neighboring towns of Westford and Littleton, it forms an elevated range of hill country similar to that formed by Harvard and Bolton, only of lesser height. Within its boundaries and those of its neighbor towns are found some of the largest ponds of Middlesex. Although unlike Concord or Sunbury, which are flat and meadowy, and which have the benefit of a river to supply their most beautiful points, this town may be said to possess a landscape not inferior to them.

From a picturesque point of view, the near vicinity of running water is most favorable for producing interesting places. The variety of tree forms found in such localities, with the different crops on the cultivated lands adjoining, are enhanced by the winding course of the stream. Though without a river, this town has two mill streams which in a great degree replace one. Two sections of the town are crossed by

[1] By George Barton, a native of Acton, and geologic teacher in the School of Technology, Boston.

[2] By Arthur F. Davis, resident of the town.

large brooks. Both West and South Acton are traversed by Fort Pond Brook, and the frequent dams erected for mill purposes create a succession of charming ponds.

The finest stretch of this stream is perhaps that from South Acton Village to the road leading to Concord Junction at Hanson's. There it bends and twists its way through a fine succession of rocky and woody hollows, with here and there an interruption in the shape of a mill. In this section we are sure it is equal to any similar water-course in Middlesex in beauty. Through West Acton it creates by its wayward course many interesting places, but is not so picturesque as the locality just mentioned.

As one comes along the highway leading from East Acton to the Centre, he crosses a stream converted by a mill-dam just below into a long, shallow pond, which extends northward some distance. This is Nashoba Brook, and, although smaller than the other, is the most picturesque stream within the town.

Nashoba, from its source in Westford, comes down a long, winding valley into the meadows of East Acton. Where it enters Acton it is a quiet stream, flowing unnoticed through stretches of low land until it reaches the first mill, some two miles from its head-waters. At this place, where is a saw-mill, are found some rare bits, considered from a painter's point of view.

Three tributary brooks enter Nashoba within the territory of Acton. The first enters near the Carlisle boundary; the largest, Nagog Brook, the outlet to Nagog Pond (this name is not Magog, but Nagog. The old Indian name is a good one) joins it a mile or so below the first mill-dam. Just below this is a smaller rivulet, which drains the meadows north and west of the Centre. The territory which lies between the first and third mills embrace the finest and most picturesque spots on the stream.

The old Jonathan Wheeler place, which is in this neighborhood, is particularly notable as being one of the most beautiful localities in the town. Just below the third mill the brook is crossed by a bridge a few rods south of the old Revolutionary bridge (now gone), over which the minute-men marched to Concord *via* the Strawberry Hill road and the fields. Still farther down the stream is the long pond first mentioned, with its wide reach of intervale on either side and picturesque surroundings of the old mill and dam which creates it.

Both our Acton brooks are tributary to the Assabet River, and unite their waters with it just over the Concord line. Although, like other streams, ours are perhaps the most attractive in the spring and fall, yet no season will be found unattractive about them. Each has its peculiar charm, which, if noticed, can never fail to give pleasure to the observer. Each nook and corner in their vicinity will amply repay the effort made to visit them, and a spare hour spent about them is looked back upon with interest.

The pond region belonging to Acton is not extensive. There are only two small ponds—Grassy and Sinking Ponds—which are entirely within the town limits. Grass Pond is unique in having a singular sedgy growth about its margin, and is a pretty little sheet of water, famed for its lilies with pink-tinted leaves, which grow in great profusion.

Sinking Pond is a minute reproduction of Walden, as it used to be before the building of the railroad and the advent of the modern pic-nic ground. The water of this pond, which has no visible outlet or inlet, is very clear and pure. Scarcely any vegetable matter appears about its borders, and it is surrounded by a high ridge of scrubby sand-hills.

Nagog, of which Acton possesses the larger part, is the first lake in this section in point of size, its length being about two miles and its width one mile. Its waters are quite clear and deep, and are broken only by one small island near the southern end.

There are many fine groups of trees about this southern end, which is wild and woody. Here are the greatest number of choice spots in early spring days, when the young leaves of the birches first green the wood, and the brilliant oriole hangs her nest on delicate pensile limbs over the water.

The shore on this side is fringed by quantities of blueberry bushes and is rocky, without a beach. Back from these the hills rise up in broad bush-grown swells to the highest point of Acton—Nagog Hill, as it is called.

The most vital and peculiar feature of our Acton landscape is found in its apple orchards. These are the most interesting part of the natural scenery here. Other towns, doubtless, share with Acton in this respect, but in none of them, in Middlesex at least, does the apple-tree reach such a picturesque state. The farmers do not think, many of them, that the chance and irregular groups of wild apples springing up beside the road, side wall, or in corners in the pastures, are worth consideration. However, there is no more beautiful combination of color in the landscape than that offered by these trees in the time of their bloom.

Wild apples are proverbially famous for the delicacy and fragrance of their bloom, which is also of richer color than that of the cultivated varieties. Cultivated orchards, of course, are in greater number than these wild trees, and are rightly paramount in commercial importance. Although planted as they are in checker-board form for economy of space and ease of cultivation, nature early asserts her magnificent arrangement and leans the trees in different directions. There is nothing commonplace about the apple-tree wherever found. Its limbs are crooked and full of surprising twists, and its spray, though coarse, is full of characteristic kinks. With the possible exception of a few varieties, it never forms a regular cylindrical head, but with its growing years increases in the beauty of its irregular outline. The

orchards are, in short, most typical of our rocky, hilly country, and are its crowning beauty.

The magnificent blooming tree is a perpetual reproach to those who only consider it after its fruit is packed away in a cellar or in barrels ready for market. The aboundant growth of wood and orchard afford the birds sufficient protection and food to enable them to multiply without molestation in Acton. Consequently, our ornithological list embraces most of the species found in inland New England, with the exception of the sea birds, a few of which visit our ponds and brooks in the early spring or fall. The large family of wood warblers in particular thrive here; the catalogue often comprises upward of twelve species and, doubtless, a more practical observer might extend the list.

In the flora, too, Acton offers particularly rich opportunities. The varied character of the country affords protection to a surprisingly wide variety of plant growth. Among the trees we have nearly all found in Massachusetts. One, however, the true paper or canoe birch, is well-nigh extinct here, only a few scattered specimens remaining in town.

GAME IN ACTON.—The hills, woods, brooks and ponds of Acton have been noted from earliest dates for the frequent visits of the disciples of the gun and rod. The Indians for generations had the first chance on these grounds. We need not go to the books to be sure that they were in goodly numbers and in trim for luek among the fins, the furs and the feathers.

The apostle John, when he went on his missionary tours among the Indians, had to come to these parts, for he was sure to find an audience along the Nashoba waters and the "big brook." These Indians could sing. Eliot had good success in that line. Wilson relates that at their meeting "the Indians sung a Psalm, made Indian by Eliot in one of our ordinary English tunes melodiously." In 1689 there were twenty-four Indian preachers. In 1676 there were 567 praying Indians at Nashoba plantation.

James Spear, with his Indian choir, sung Psalms at one of Eliot's meetings May 14, 1654. There has always been something in the atmosphere or in the ground or in the spot in this vicinity congenial to music. We have heard fish and game stories among the veterans of our own day, and have heard them sing and whistle and blow their horns on their homeward beat; but those red men of the past, if they could speak, would easily silence these modern tongues.

The earliest records show that the brooks were once stocked with some varieties not now common.

Captain Daniel Tuttle's mother, Harriet Wetherbee, sister to Edward Wetherbee, Senior, used to go down to the brook, below the dam, and throw out shad and alewives in her day. They had at one time, on the Assabet, at Southeast Acton, a fish warden and fish weirs.

As early as 15th of February, 1739, there was an article in the town warrant "to know whether the town will insist on Mr. Faulkner's opening his dam 30 days in a year, as ye law directs, where alewives and other fish pass in great plenty."

There used to be a deer's man appointed by the town to look after the deer and decide upon questions relating to the matter, which shows the deer were here. There have always been self-appointed private wardens to look after the dears, but these were bona-fide *deer*.

Men who hunt and fish for sport are noted for their quiet, modest ways, and it is difficult to get any statement from them on their luck, but by hard pressing, a few items have been secured, which may be of interest to the public. Worse records even than these could be had, if the right men could be interviewed by the right man. They did not intend to have their names mentioned, and so are not responsible for the publishing of the inglorious tale of their life record:

Elnathan Jones: pickerel, 3000; perch, 3000; trout, 200; bass, 100; largest pickerel, 6½ lbs.; largest bass, 5 lbs. At one lucky trip the average weight of the perch, 1½ lbs., several weighing 2 lbs.; foxes, 30; gray squirrels, 200.

Hiram Hapgood in ten years: bass, 20; pickerel, 200; perch, 400; pouts, 100; crows, 1.

J. K. W. Wetherbee: bass, 10; pickerel, 1000; perch, 2000; pouts, 2500; gray squirrels, 500; raccoon, 1; hawk, five feet across from tip to tip.

Swift Fletcher: pickerel, 3000; the largest number at any one time, 167; pouts, 2500; bass, 100 (three weighing over 4 lbs., not one over 5 lbs.); foxes, 100; raccoons, 7; ducks, 30; gray squirrels, 600; sold 105 skins one year for a robe for Captain Whitcomb; partridges, 2000; rabbits, 1000; pigeons, 400; Otter, 1.

Fifty years ago pigeons were abundant in the woods, and during some seasons made it lively for the huntsmen, who would have great sport in shooting them upon the wing as they flew in flocks over certain localities.

The pigeon-stands were quite common, where, by nets and proper baiting, they could be caught in large numbers.

The stocking of Nagog Pond a few years since by the town with bass has introduced a new variety in the fishing sport.

On the 1st of July, when the permit is issued for trying the luck on these delightful waters, there is a deeided fish smell in this vicinity. The most sober men in town—deacons, ministers, lawyers, justices of the peace, senators and representatives—doctors—the moderator himself—may be seen rigging their poles and reeling to and fro—with their lines, if perchance, they may strike the spot where they are sure of a prize.

Just watch the justice a moment. He is leaning over the boat. He hears the click of the reel as his line spins out through the ruffled waters. What are all his cases in court now? There is only one case on the docket just now, and that must have all the nerve and muscle. You may laugh at him and call him a fool, and off his base; but the question fairly holding the court is, *bass* or *no bass*.



CAPT. DANIEL TUTTLE.

THE 19th OF APRIL, 1861.—Again the historic day returns, rich with its patriotic memories. We hail its presence as we would that of an old and endeared friend come back to the family hearthstone. It recalls events which should never be forgotten while the government remains or its annals stand upon the imperishable record.

In the War of the Revolution, without the 19th of April, there might never have been the 17th of June, and without the 17th of June there might never have been the 4th of July, and without the 4th of July the stars and stripes would never have floated o'er land and sea to the joy of many generations. To the citizens of Acton and vicinity this day has been for over a hundred years, of all other days in the year, the most marked. Its yearly advent has been celebrated with new and old rehearsals of what occurred at the North Bridge at Concord, with the ringing of bells, the firing of salutes, the parade of military, orations, bonfires and general glorification. The old patriots who were at the bridge in 1775, when Captain Davis fell at the head of his command, have told it to their children and their children's children. The monument which stands upon the village green is but an embodiment, in solid native granite, of the sentiment which has thus been alive among these hills and valleys for over a hundred years.

When the telegram came to Captain Daniel Tuttle, on the evening of April 15th, to have his company report the next morning at Lowell, armed and equipped for war service, it found a response prompt and earnest from every man.

Though scattered in different towns, and not expecting the summons, the bells were rung in the night, messengers sent in all directions post-haste, equipments forwarded, carriages procured, overcoats provided—for it was a cold, cheerless April night—and at 7.30 o'clock on the morning of April 16th, Captain Tuttle was able to report to Col. Jones, of the Sixth Regiment, his whole command ready for duty.

Farms, shops, stores, homes, families, friends, plans, had been left behind in an instant, and they were on their way to destinies which none could foretell. They had played the soldier on the parade-ground in peaceful days, in holiday attire. It now meant business. The country was in a death-struggle all at once. Its very capitol was in danger of capture or destruction by rebel hands.

Captain Daniel Tuttle was born February 14, 1814, on the heights which overlook the village and town, one of the oldest of a large family of children. His father, Francis Tuttle, Esq., was for a long time an officer and influential citizen of the place. The captain was elected to command the Davis Guards in the years 1855, 1857, 1859, 1861. He was twice postmaster. He was forty-seven years old at the outbreak of the war, and exempt by age from military duty. He was a Breckenridge Democrat in the preceding canvass for the Presidency against Lincoln. He had at the time a large farm on his hands, a wife and numerous children—some of them young.

At the opening of a new season, and with all his cares so pressing, it seemed impossible for him to leave; yet when the summons came there was but one decision. When seated in his wagon, just as he was about to leave, he said to family, neighbors and townsmen, as a parting word, "God take care of you all."

In those dark, ominous moments of suspense, the appearance of the old Sixth Regiment in Boston, in the early morning after the evening's summons, and its steady march down Washington Street, with knapsacks, overcoats, flashing bayonets and beating drums, on their way to the seat of war, and the cheering and almost frenzied crowds which accompanied every step, was a scene which it is worth a life to witness. No one not present can know the enthusiasm of that occasion.

Their march down Broadway, New York, was a repetition of the same scene, only on a grander scale, and in a city whose citizens were not supposed to be so largely in sympathy with the soldier. The appearance of the old Sixth Massachusetts in their streets, made up of all parties, and with each man's life offered for sacrifice, united the divided city, and they became as one man in saying "The Union shall be preserved." The passage through Philadelphia was in the night, or there would have been another repetition of the same *boundless cheer* and God speed the right, from the surging crowds of that ever loyal city.

Baltimore was reached on the 19th of April. It was the North Bridge of division between the contending sections of the land. The city overflowed with bitterness, and cursing against the Union, and the men who came to defend her.

"On this morning," says the historian, "the streets were filled with a scowling, angry mob, as the cars, eleven in all, containing the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment, rolled into town. The cars were drawn by horses across the city from one railroad to another. As they penetrated farther into the city the crowd became more dense, and the faces grew blacker with hate. Stones, brickbats and all kinds of missiles were thrown through the windows of the cars. At first the soldiers bore it patiently and without resistance, until all but two of the cars reached the station. These two, separated from the others, were surrounded by a yelling crowd, that opposed their passage. The officers consulted and concluded to disembark the men and march them in solid column to the station. The brave fellows went on through a shower of stones, bricks and scattering shots.

"At last, just before they reached the station, the colonel gave orders to fire. The soldiers discharged their guns among the crowd and several of the mob fell dead or wounded. The troops reached the station and took the cars. The scene that ensued was terrific. Taunts, clothed in the most offensive language, were

hurled at the troops by the panting crowd, who, breathless with running, pressed to the windows, presenting knives and revolvers and cursing up into the faces of the soldiers. Amid such a scene the Massachusetts regiment passed out of the city, having had four of their number killed and thirty-six wounded.

"On this very day, the 19th of April, eighty-six years before, the first blood shed in the war of the Revolution had stained the grass in front of Lexington meeting-house, and on the Concord plains.

"On the second anniversary, long to be remembered, the first blood in the Civil War flowed in the streets of Baltimore, shed from the veins of the descendants of these early patriots."

THE DAVIS GUARDS received at home, on their return, Aug. 10, 1861. The Davis Guards arrived at South Acton at about 8.30 o'clock, Saturday morning. A large crowd had collected to welcome them home. After cordial greetings a procession was formed and proceeded to the Centre in the following order: Col. W. E. Faulkner, chief marshal, assisted by Henry Wilder, James Wetherbee and John H. Sanborn; National Band of Worcester; Union Guards, Capt. A. C. Handley, 50 men; Liberty Guards, Capt. S. Willis, 40 men; Drum corps; Hayward Guards, Capt. Daniel Jones, 62 men; Lowell Brigade Band (this band barely escaped with their lives at Baltimore); Davis Guards, Capt. David Tuttle, 52 men; Concord Artillery, Capt. Prescott, 54 men; Detachment of Concord Artillery, with field-pieces, Capt. M. Hobson, 12 men; Chief Engineers of Concord Fire Department; Hook-and-Ladder Co., Charles Stowell, foreman, 10 men; Independent Engine Co., Jonas Melvin, foreman, 60 men.

A little out of the village a procession had been formed, under the direction of Samuel Hosmer, Esq., of the citizens of Acton and the adjoining towns, awaiting the arrival from South Acton.

Upon the arrival of the military they formed in the rear, and were thus escorted into town. Upon the arrival of the procession in town it gathered around the speaker's stand, when prayer was offered by the chaplain, Rev. Alpha Morton, after which Dr. John M. Miles, in behalf of the town, welcomed them in an eloquent address. This was responded to in behalf of Capt. Tuttle, by Dr. Harris Cowdrey.

Col. Faulkner made a brief address to the audience. About 12.30 o'clock the companies formed into line, and marching to the monument, three cheers were called for and heartily given for the American flag, and at the same time a new, beautiful banner was run up to the top of the monument by Willie Boss, from which point, as if by magic, it sprang into the air, the band playing the "Star Spangled Banner." Hon. Charles Hudson, of Lexington, then delivered a very able address.

After an intermission of an hour, sentiments were offered by the toast-master, O. W. Mead, Esq. Brief addresses were made by Rev. James Fletcher, of Danvers (a native of Acton), Hon. E. W. Bull, George Stevens, Esq., John White (a member of Davis Guards, who fought under the stars and stripes in Mexico, who is an Englishman, but when the order for marching came, volunteered to go with the Davis Guards), Hon. James M. Usher, of Medford, George M. Brooks, Esq., of Concord, Capt. Phelps, of Lexington, and Lieut. Bowers, of the Concord Rifles.

There were about three thousand people present. The route of the procession was handsomely decorated with flags and mottoes, as was also the new store of James Tuttle & Co., at South Acton. Over the armory, "Davis Guards not afraid to go;" in the town-house, "God defend the right;" on the monument, "Union, Davis, Hosmer, Hayward;" at Capt. Daniel Jones', "Welcome home;" at Lieut. J. Blodgett's, "Honor to the brave;" at Hon. John Fletcher, Jr.'s, "First to go;" at E. S. Buffum's, "Safe return;" over J. Fletcher & Sons' store, "Through Baltimore."

A detachment of the Concord Artillery fired a national salute on the arrival of the Guards at South Acton, also as the procession reached the centre of the town.

THE CIVIL WAR.[1]—The existence of a military company in Acton at the outbreak of the Rebellion was of great advantage to the town.

In 1850, on the seventy-fifth anniversary of Concord Fight, a union celebration took place at Concord, in which the inhabitants of Acton took part. A large company from Acton represented the minute-men of the Revolution, officered by Colonel Winthrop E. Faulkner, as captain, and Daniel Jones, the son of Captain Silas Jones, who commanded the Davis Blues in Boston in the War of 1812, and James Harris as lieutenants. They wore a flannel blouse and carried canteens with 1775 stenciled on them as uniform, and armed with guns of no particular standard, though some of them looked old enough to have been at the original Concord Fight; but the contents of some of the canteens, judging of its potency, was of a later period.

The marching of this company elicited warm encomiums from military men present, and the result was a reawakening of interest in military matters in Acton and the permanent organizing of Company E, Sixth Massachusetts Regiment, known as the Davis Guards, the following winter.

Colonel Faulkner was the first captain of this company, and its other commanding officers till the outbreak of the Rebellion are here given: Captain Daniel Jones, Rufus Holden, Captain Moses Taylor, Captain Daniel Tuttle, Captain Aaron C. Handley, and again Captain Tuttle who was still at its head in 1861.

In obedience to General Order No. 4, issued by Governor Andrew, January 16, 1861, requiring the militia of the State to be forthwith put into a state of efficiency, this company practiced at drill every

[1] From an address by Luther Conant, Esq., before the Grand Army.

week during the winter and recruited its ranks to be ready to answer any call. On the 19th of January, at a meeting of the field officers and company commanders, at the American House in Lowell, it was unanimously voted to tender the services of the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment to the Governor and Legislature when such services shall become desirable for purposes contemplated in General Order No. 4.

On the 23d of January the Legislature proffered to the President of the United States such aid in men and money as he he may require to maintain the authority of the National Government. This resolution was forwarded the same day to the President.

The result of this act of volunteering was that the Sixth Regiment was the first regiment called, and General Butler was the first to receive a commission as a general officer of volunteers.

Many have never been able to understand how a regiment from Massachusetts should have reached Washington in advance of nearer States.

The circumstances of the transmission of the order are given somewhat in detail. The proclamation of President Lincoln calling for 75,000 men, and convoking an extra session of Congress was dated April 15th, but did not reach Boston until the 16th and was not received at Albany until the 17th, receiving from the Governor of New York on the 19th the response by telegram to the President that the Seventh would start for Washington that evening.

On the 15th of April Governor Andrew received a telegram from Senator Henry Wilson announcing the call for troops.

The Governor at once issued his Special Order No. 14. commanding the colonels of the Third, Fourth, Sixth and Eighth Regiments forthwith to muster their commands in uniform on Boston Common, and sent it by special messengers. Colonel Jones, who was in Boston, received his order first, took it to Brigadier-General Butler for regular transmission and issued his orders the same day by telegraph to the Lowell and Lawrence companies of the Sixth and took the four o'clock train on the Fitchburg Railroad to carry the order to the companies in Acton and Groton to assemble in Huntington Hall in Lowell on the morning of the 16th at seven o'clock—uniformed and ready to proceed to Washington.

Colonel Jones, on his trip to Groton, met Captain A. C. Handley in the railroad station at South Acton, who immediately started with the order to Captain Tuttle.

Late in the afternoon of the 15th Captain Daniel Tuttle was chosen in town-meeting to an important office. On being requested by the moderator to be sworn as usual, he declined for the reason that he was liable to be sent out of the State with his company any day.

In a little more than an hour the summons came. Captain Tuttle started immediately for Lowell and messengers were sent at once to rally the absent men. Captain A. C. Handley went to Leominster to notify the Wilder Brothers and returned with them on time.

Other messengers were sent in different directions, and at two o'clock in the morning of the 16th the bells of the town-house and church were rung, calling the people of Acton to witness the departure of that military company which was the first in this or any other State to leave their homes in response to the President's call.

The company reached Lowell before the hour named, 7 A.M. on the morning of the 16th, and with the other companies of the regiment were dispatched to Boston during the day. Its departure to Washington was delayed somewhat by reason that it was late on the morning of the 16th that Governor Andrew decided to attach to the Sixth Regiment Companies L and R, from Stoneham and Boston.

The regiment left Boston about sunset on the evening of the 17th, and reached New York the next morning and Philadelphia the next afternoon. It left Philadelphia at one on the morning of the 19th, and, had there been no delay, would have passed through Baltimore early in the morning and probably without opposition; but the train carrying the Sixth was a very long one, and the passage of the Susquehanna (then made by ferry) consumed so much time and the slow rate of speed owing to the length of the train delayed its arrival at Baltimore until ten o'clock in the forenoon.

At that time each separate car was drawn through the streets of the city by strings of horses, and thus the different companies of the regiment became separated.

The first six companies, including Company E (Davis Guards), passed through without serious molestation, but the remaining five companies were attacked by the mob, through which they gallantly forced their way, though not without thirty-six of the men receiving gun shot wounds and the loss of four soldiers killed.

In the long procession of fallen patriots who were to pass forward and onward to eternity from the battle-fields of the Rebellion, these four Massachusetts soldiers led the way.

Leaving Baltimore about two o'clock the Sixth reached Washington—forty miles distant—late in the afternoon, and were received by General McPowell, of General Scott's staff, and were assigned quarters in the Senate chamber in the Capitol, where they remained about twelve days.

The regiment, aided by a part of the Eighth Regiment and a battery, the whole under the command of General Butler, then went back and re-opened the route through Baltimore, staying there some ten days, and were detailed to guard the junction of the main track of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad at the Washington branch, at the Relay House, where they remained till the expiration of their service.

At this time detachments were sent to Baltimore—

one to arrest Marshal Ham and another to capture a noted rebel who was wanted at Fortress Monroe.

The regiment was mustered in at Washington April 22d, and discharged August 2d, being absent from home about 115 days. The term of service, though brief, is assured a high place in history. This regiment was the first to leave home and the first to be attacked. It received a vote of thanks from the first session of the Thirty-seventh Congress for the alacrity with which they responded to the call of the President, and for the bravery and patriotism which they displayed on the 19th of April in fighting their way through Baltimore on their march for the defence of the national Capitol.

In his order dismissing the regiment Governor Andrew said: "Its gallant conduct has reflected new lustre on the Commonwealth, and has given new historic interest to the 19th of April. It will be received by our people with warm hearts and generous hands." Of the fifty-two men who went out under Captain Tuttle, twenty-seven are now living.

Shortly after the return home of the Sixth Regiment, Colonel Jones commenced to recruit a regiment of three years' men, to be numbered the Sixth Massachusetts. It was not till the ranks were full and it was nearly ready to leave for the seat of war that Governor Andrew decided to retain the old Sixth as a militia regiment, to be called upon in cases of special urgency.

The new regiment was numbered the Twenty-Sixth, Most of the officers and many of the men of the old Sixth had enlisted for three years, and were enrolled in the Twenty-sixth. Captain Tuttle's health not permitting him to return to the war, William H. Chapman, lieutenant of Company E, old Sixth, became captain of Company E, Twenty-sixth Regiment, and twenty members of the old company enlisted in the new one. This regiment was mustered into the service of the United States October 18, 1861, and left the State November 21st, same year, taking passage on the steamship "Constitution" to Ship Island, on the coast of Louisiana, and remained at Ship Island about four months.

At that time the fleet under Commodores Farragut and Porter, bombarded Forts St. Philip and Jackson, on the Mississippi River, and the Twenty-sixth Regiment moved in rear of the forts in readiness to assault, but the surrender of the forts avoided the necessity of an attack, and saved many valuable lives.

After the surrender the regiment garrisoned the forts about four months, and then was ordered to New Orleans for provost duty. It remained there about a year, then started with General Banks on the expedition up the Red River as far as Opelousas; then ordered back to New Iberia, where about three-fourths of the company re-enlisted, and were given a furlough, commencing April 4, 1864, of one month, to visit their friends at home. Upon the expiration of the furlough the regiment was ordered to return to New Orleans, La., which journey was made on steamship "Cahawba" and arrived at its destination May 20th.

After occupying Carrollton and Morganza, it returned to New Orleans, and on July 11th embarked on steamer "Charles Thomas" for Bermuda Hundred, Va., which place was reached the 21st of July. On the 28th the regiment marched to Deep Bottom, Va., where considerable picket firing took place, but no casualties happened. Subsequently the regiment was ordered to Washington, D. C., and then marched through a portion of Maryland to the valley of the Shenandoah River, reaching Winchester on the morning of the battle of September 19, 1864. The battle commenced about 10 o'clock in the forenoon and lasted till 5 P.M, when the enemy retreated. The regiment, being in the lead, advanced too far without proper support, and found itself with the enemy not only in front, but on both flanks, and, being thus exposed to a severe cross-fire, suffered severely, Company E having seven men killed or mortally wounded. Of the four months' men who went into the battle, at its close only twenty-three were fit for duty. The battle of Fisher's Hill took place three days later.

On October 18th the three years' term of service of that portion of the regiment that did not enlist having expired, the regiment was consolidated into a battalion of five companies by Special Order No. 64, and those whose term of enlistment had expired were separated from their comrades who had re-enlisted. In the battle of the following day, let it be said to the credit of many of those discharged men, though under no obligation to do so, they gallantly again entered the ranks, fought all day and helped to change a temporary defeat into a glorious victory.

I am sorry to say that this voluntary act of patriotism cost some of these noble men their lives. Corporal Loker tells me that after the fight he helped to bury two men killed in the action whose term of service had expired before the battle.

On October 19th the rebel army surprised the Union troops at Cedar Creek, driving them back four miles in confusion. This was the scene of Sheridan's famous ride from "Winchester, twenty miles away," though, as a matter of fact, the Union troops had made a stand before his arrival. The remarks he made to his men greatly inspirited them, though it is not probable that these remarks will ever take a place in polite literature.

The results of the battle of Cedar Creek were the capture of nearly all of the rebel baggage-train and field artillery, and the complete dispersion of Early's forces. The battalion remained at Winchester during the winter, were ordered to Washington May 2d, and one month later were sent to Savannah, Ga., where they remained until August 26, 1865, when the battalion was mustered out of service; left Savannah September 12th, and reached Boston September 18th; were sent to Gallop's Island for final payment, and



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reached Acton the evening of October 21, 1865, after an absence of four years and three days.

In the narrative of Company E, Twenty-sixth Regiment, I stated that Governor Andrew decided to retain the Sixth as a militia regiment to answer sudden calls. In response to such a call it left the State August 31, 1862, to serve for nine months under Colonel Albert S. Follansbee, of Lowell. Company E, of Acton, was officered as follows: Aaron C. Handley, captain; Aaron S. Fletcher and George W. Rand, lieutenants; Dr. Isaiah Hutchins, hospital steward for the regiment.

Captain Handley had commanded the Davis Guards some years before the war. His grandfather had served in the Revolutionary War and his father did military duty in the War of 1812.

The regiment was ordered to proceed to Suffolk, Virginia, near Fortress Monroe. It assisted in the construction of Forts Nansemond and McLellan. The regiment was detailed for guard duty in the forts, afterwards for scouting duty and destroying rebel railroads, among which were the Norfolk and Petersburg Railroad and the Seaboard and Roanoke.

The regiment took part in several battles and skirmishes. Among these may be mentioned the Deserted House, Carrsville and Ludlow Lawrence's home. In these actions the Sixth had twenty-seven men killed and wounded. No casualties in Acton company, though that company lost three men by disease. The regiment was mustered out June 3, 1863.

The services of the old Sixth were required for the third and last time during the war, for a term of enlistment of one hundred days, commencing July 18, 1864.

Col. Follansbee again led the regiment, and Co. E, Davis Guards, of Acton, was under the following list of officers: Frank M. Whitcomb, who was orderly sergeant during the nine months' term of service in 1861 and 1863, was captain, with George W. Knight and Isaiah Hutchins as lieutenants. The regiment was ordered to proceed to Washington, D. C., and marched to Arlington Heights and performed fatigue duty in front of Fort Stevens for two or three weeks. This fatigue duty consisted in leveling the ground and felling trees to give greater range and efficiency to the great guns of the fort. After this time it was ordered to garrison Fort Delaware and to guard the rebel prisoners in the fort. After a useful but uneventful term of service it was mustered out, Oct. 27th, and returned home.

Of the one hundred men in Captain Whitcomb's company, twenty-nine were from Acton. No casualties or deaths occurred during this enlistment.

The official military record of the town of Acton reports as sent to the army during the War of the Rebellion 215 different men, including twenty commissioned officers. The adjutant-general's report for 1865 states that at the close of the war she had answered all calls required to fill her quota, and had a surplus of thirty men to her credit. The number of commissioned officers was exceptionally large. No Acton-born soldier, credited to her quota, deserted, or failed to receive an honorable discharge.

The recruiting committee of the town were the selectmen: James E. Billings, J. K. W. Wetherbee and Jonas K. Putney, with an assistant committee of three: Daniel Wetherbee, Capt. A. C. Handley and Varnum B. Mead.

Four brothers enlisted from one family, and the head of that family a widow, Mrs. Abram Handley. Though one of these brothers (Frank) died early in the war, and another (George) was discharged for disability, their combined terms of service were more than ten years.

Mr. Wheeler's three sons all enlisted. In six other cases, two brothers were in the ranks together, and in one both father and son, William and William B. Reed, were in the service at the same time.

Luke Smith was credited three times to the quota of the town, whose father, Solomon Smith, marched over the same road under Captain Isaac Davis to the old North Bridge that his son, Luke, followed in part under Captain Daniel Tuttle, eighty-four years later. Mr. Smith was the oldest soldier credited to Acton's quota, having at his last enlistment (for one hundred days) in 1864, reached the age of more than fifty years.

Thomas Kinsley, Jr., was the youngest recruit, being but fifteen years and two months old at the time of his enlistment.

Of the 216 men credited to Acton, eighteen died while in service, either killed in battle or victims of disease. This does not include natives or residents of Acton, who were credited to other towns, who died in service.

Memorial Library.—This memorial structure, just completed, stands upon the north side of the Main Street at the Centre, nearly opposite the Davis Monument. It has an ideal location, partially shaded by the elms and maples, which give it a classic repose even at the start.

Its approach is by an easy ascent from the east, south and west, over concrete walks. It is a few rods northeast of the Town House, with which it is connected by concrete and a fine lawn, a site known for over sixty years as the Fletcher Homestead. It is the most unique and costly building ever erected in town, and is destined to be the centre of culture for many generations to come.

The style of architecture is Romanesque. The external appearance and the internal arrangements and furnishings are in harmony with this idea, and can be properly judged only from that standpoint. The architects are H. W. Hartwell and William G. Richardson, of Boston. The building is composed of red brick and brownstone.

Its extreme length is sixty-six feet six inches and its depth thirty-two feet and ten inches from south to

north. The principal entrance opens upon the south and through a large, solid freestone arch, which has rich mouldings and carved spandrels, within which are to be placed memorial tablets to the soldiers in the War of the Rebellion, of which this town furnished a large number. On entering the building, a reading-room, called the Memorial Room, sixteen by twenty-five feet, is found at the left. It has heavy beamed ceiling, a large antique brick fire-place and decorated walls. Above the fire-place is a handsome brown-stone tablet, with this carved inscription:

"THIS BUILDING A GIFT TO HIS NATIVE TOWN BY WILLIAM ALLEN WILDE."

The room has rich oak tables, settees and chairs, all in the olden style. Opposite the reading-room, and at the right, is the book apartment, thirty-two feet six inches long, twenty-four feet six inches wide, twenty feet high. Along the sides of this are arranged book alcoves, two stories high, having light connecting galleries for the second tier, reached by stairs at the right and left of the desk occupied by the librarian. The desk is so located that the person in charge of it can command a view of the book-room and the reading room also, this latter opening into the central reading space by a large open archway. Located at the north of this central hall is the room devoted to the library trustees, thirteen by fifteen feet, with a northern light, richly furnished. Opening out of this is a fire-proof vault, where articles of value and the archives of the town can be stored. In the opposite corner is a toilet-room, fitted up with all modern conveniences. All the spaces and rooms are brilliantly lighted from chandeliers, and heated by two large furnaces in the cellar, which is by itself quite an institution—cemented, drained and plastered. The water arrangements are quite a specialty, embracing a tank in the attic, which can be easily filled by a force-pump connecting with a well that belonged to the estate, seventy-five feet deep, the bottom of which is a solid ledge, containing an unfailing spring of the purest and coolest water.

The corporators of the library under the charter are Luther Conant, Adelbert Mead, Moses Taylor, Hiram J. Hapgood, Delette H. Hall and Daniel James Wetherbee. These are constituted trustees for life, with power to fill vacancies in case of death or resignation of any one of their number. Three additional trustees are to be chosen by the town, one for three years, one for two years and one for one year.

In the future, after the organization, the town is to elect by ballot each year one trustee of the three, elective for three years.

Mr. Wilde's letter presenting Memorial Library Building to the town of Acton:

"MALDEN, MASS., Feb. 27, 1890.

"*To the Selectmen of Acton:*

"GENTLEMEN,—For a long time past it has been my intention, if ever I was able to do so, to remember my native town by the gift of some memorial to the memory of those brave and patriotic men of Acton who freely gave time, strength and health—and many of them their lives in the War of the Rebellion, 1861–65.

"To carry out this plan in what seemed to me the most advantageo and permanent method possible, I have purchased the estate of Re James Fletcher, adjacent to the Town-House, and erected thereon Memorial Library, placing upon its shelves some four thousand volume more or less, and I beg the privilege of presenting this property to tl town as a free gift, only stipulating that it shall forever be kept as Memorial Library, and free to all the citizens of the patriotic old tow of Acton, which I shall always love and be proud of.

"If it shall please the town to accept this gift I shall be glad to pa all necessary papers for the transfer of the property to whom and a such time as the town shall direct.

"I am, gentlemen, yours truly,

"WILLIAM A. WILDE."

Upon reading this letter, by Mr. Howard B. White, chairman of the Board of Selectmen, to the citizens of Acton, in town-meeting assembled, March 3, 1890, Rev. James Fletcher presented the following resolutions, which were unanimously adopted by the town, to be forwarded to Mr. Wilde in response, and to be placed upon the town records:

"WHEREAS a charter of Incorporation has passed the Legislature and been signed by his Excellency Gov. J. Q. A. Brackett incorporating the Memorial Library, and Hon. William A. Wilde, a native of Acton—now a resident of Malden—has signified his readiness to deed to the town the Memorial Library Building just completed at his expense, and the land on which it stands, and all the appurtenances thereof, including books already selected, the Memorial Room and the town-vault for the archives of the town,—

"*Resolved* 1st, We, the inhabitants of the town of Acton, in town-meeting assembled, do accept the trust and authorize the Selectmen, in behalf of the town, to sign all papers and perform all acts necessary to complete the transfer of the property to the care of the trustees.

"*Resolved* 2d, In passing this vote we wish to express to Mr. Wilde—in behalf of the present inhabitants of the town; in behalf of all future generations who may be resident here, and participants in the benefits to be enjoyed; in behalf of the soldiers of the War of the Rebellion, whose memory and valor he has so tenderly cherished in the name and arrangement of the structure—our profound appreciation of his generous gift."

"We assure him of our hearty thanks for remembering the place of his birth by a memento so enduring and so befitting the past history and future needs of the town.

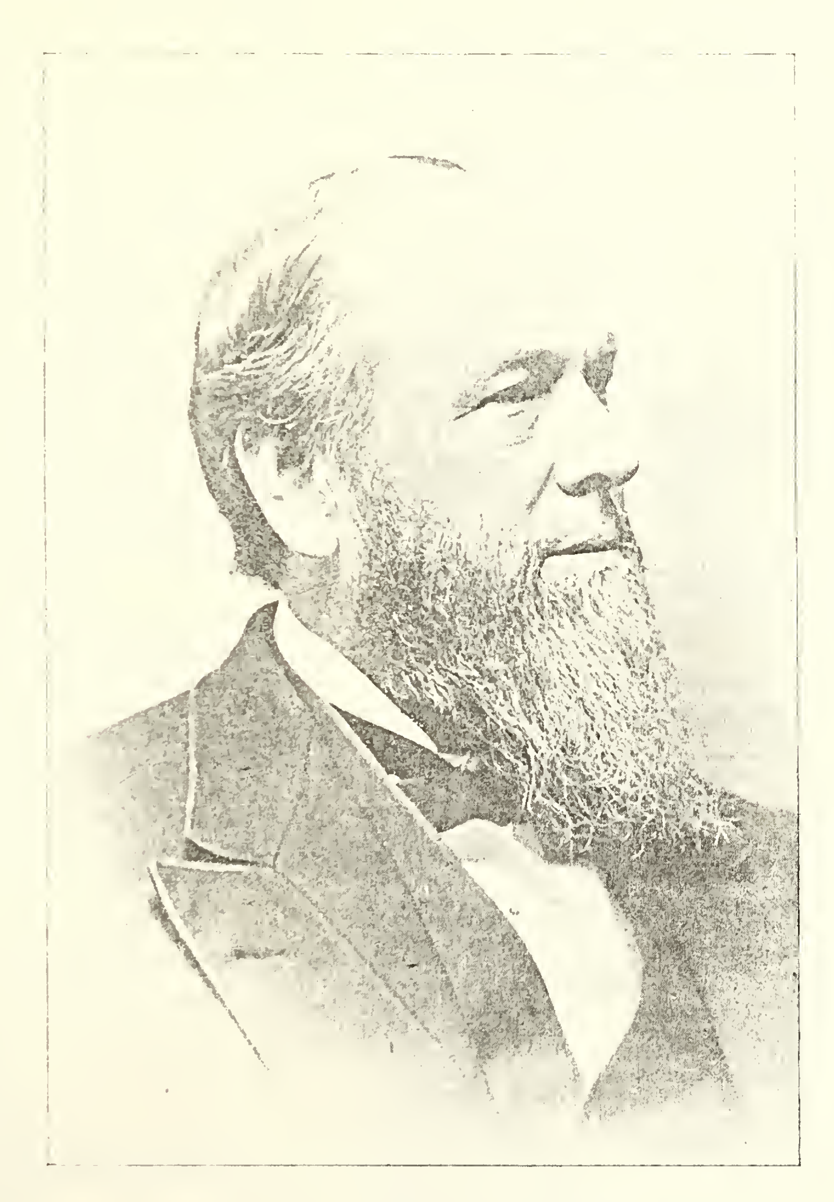
"We assure him of our cordial co-operation in doing what in us lies to perpetuate the intentions and possibilities of the trust.

"We tender to him, his companion and his children our best wishes for their life, health and prosperity, and our prayer that the donation, in which they each have a personal share and honor, may contribute to their mutual and lasting enjoyment."

The selectmen and the whole Board of Trustees were authorized to make all necessary arrangements for the dedication of the building.

The trustees chosen by the town at the March meeting, 1890, are the following: William D. Tuttle for three years, James Fletcher for two years, Howard B. White for one year.

Mr. William Allen Wilde, the donor, was born in Acton, Mass., July 11, 1827. He is now resident in Malden, Mass., and does business as a publisher, his office being at 25 Bromfield Street, Boston. His father, Joseph Wilde, lived in Southeast Acton, married Sarah Conant, of Stow, sister to Abraham and Simeon Conant, of Acton. He died in Acton, in the eighty-second year of his age. Their children were: Mary, now living in Moultonboro', N. H.; Silvia, deceased; Sarah, living with Mary; John, who was drowned;



HON. WM. A. WILDE.



Joseph, living in Natick, with seven children and prospering in business; Willliam A.; and George, living in Somerville.

Benjamin[4], the father of Joseph Wild[5], died when fifty-six years old, of yellow fever. He married Silvia Thayer, of Boston. She died two days after her husband and was buried in Acton. Her daughter, Silvia, died of yellow fever two days after her mother and was buried in Acton.

William Wild[3], the father of Benjamin[4], lived in Randolph, Mass., and died when eighty-seven years old.

William[2], the father of William[3], lived in Braintree, Mass., and died in his eighty-seventh year.

William Wild[1], the father of William[2], landed from England in 1632, and lived in Randolph, Mass., which was then a part of Braintree.

William A. Wilde[6], the son of Joseph Wild[5], married, first, Loise A. Mace, of Pepperell, Mass., without issue. Married, second, Lydia Jane Bride, of Berlin, Mass. *Children:* Jennie, born September 7, 1854, deceased at sixteen years of age; Carrie, born October 12, 1856, deceased at seven years of age; William Eugene, born in Acton September 12, 1858, married, in 1885, Effie Jean Dresser, of Portland, Me. Married, third, Celestia Dona Hoyt, of Wentworth, N. H. *Children:* Alice Elizabeth, born June 12, 1869; Allen Hoyt, born April 29, 1874.

Mr. Wilde was educated at Groton and Pepperell Academies. He has taught school twelve years, been superintendent of the schools of the city of Malden; five years chairman of the Water Board when large and expensive water-works were being constructed. He represented Malden two years in the Legislature, and was chairman of the House Committee of Education. He has been trustee of the Malden Library eight years, and is now one of the Prison Commissioners of the State of Massachusetts.

OUR HONORED DEAD (Tablet List).

BY JULIAN TUTTLE.

Luke W. Bowers; he enlisted in Aug., 1862, Co. E, 33d Mass. Reg.; died of wounds May 1, 1864, at Resaca, Georgia.

Albert Conant, enlisted Dec., 1861, in Co. F, 30th Mass. Reg.; he died at sea Jan., 1864, on the voyage home.

Elbridge Conant, enlisted Aug. 18, 1862, in Co. E, 6th Mass. Reg.; died Feb, 1863, at Suffolk, Va.

Eugene L. Hall, enlisted Feb., 1864, in Co. E, 26th Mass. Reg.; killed Sept., 1864, at Winchester, Va.

Frank Handley, enlisted Sept., 1861, in Co. E, 26th Mass. Reg.; died July, 1862, at Fort St. Philip, near New Orleans, La.

Augustus W. Hosmer, enlisted Sept., 1861, in 26th Mass. Reg.; band; died Nov., 1861, at Acton, Mass.

Eli Huggins, enlisted Sept., 1861, in Co. A, 26th Mass. Reg.; died Oct, 1863 at New Orleans, La.

Samuel C. Hanscom, enlisted Dec., 1862, in Co. A, 2d Mass. Cavalry; killed July, 1864, at Aldie, Va.

James P. Hanscom, enlisted May, 1861, in Co. E, 1st Minnesota Reg.; died Nov., 1862, at Portsmouth Grove, R. I.

John A. Howard, enlisted Aug., 1862, in Co. E, 26th Mass. Reg.; died Dec., 1863, at New Orleans, La.

John S. Harris, enlisted June, 1861, in Co. F, 11th Mass. Reg.; killed May, 1863, at Chancellorsville, Va.

Francis Kinsley, enlisted Sept., 1861, in Co. E, 26th Mass. Reg.; died April, 1864, at Acton, Mass.

Thomas Kinsley, Jr., enlisted Feb., 1864, in Co. E, 26th Mass. Reg.; died Nov., 1864, at Washington, D. C.

George Warren Knight, enlisted Oct., 1862, in Co. E, 53d Mass. Reg.; died April, 1863, at New Orleans, La.

Henry W. Lazell, enlisted Sept., 1861, in Co. E, 26th Mass. Reg.; died Aug, 1863, at New Orleans, La.

James R. Lentell, enlisted Sept., 1861, in Co. E, 26th Mass. Reg.; died Nov., 1862, at New Orleans, La.

William H. Loker, enlisted in Sept., 1861, in Co. E, 26th Mass. Reg.; died April, 1863, at Acton, Mass.

Marivan Miner, enlisted Aug., 1862, in Co. I, 26th Mass. Reg.; died Feb., 1863, at New Orleans, La.

Matthew McKinney, enlisted Aug., 1863, in Co. E, 26th Mass. Reg.; died Sept., 1863, at Berwick City, La.

William B. Reed, enlisted Aug., 1862, in Co. E, 26th Mass. Reg.; died Jan., 1864, at Franklin, La.

Warren R. Wheeler, enlisted Sept., 1861, in Co. E, 26th Mass. Reg.; died July, 1862, at Fort St. Philip, near New Orleans, La.

James M. Wright, enlisted Nov., 1861, in Co. B, 32d Mass. Reg.; died Sept., 1862, at Philadelphia, Penn.

John H. P. White, enlisted Sept., 1863, in Co. E, 26th Mass. Reg; died July, 1863, at New Orleans, La.

Samuel E. Wilson, enlisted in 1864, in Co. K, 7th California Reg.; died Feb., 1866, at Fort Yuma, Cal.

Daniel A. Loverlng, enlisted Aug., 1862, in Co. H, 13th Mass. Reg.; killed June, 1864, at Cold Harbor, Va.

Luke Robbins, enlisted in Boston, Mass., June, 1864, as a seaman for two years; served on board the "Ohio" and "Seminole;" was killed on the "Seminole" at Galveston, Texas, May, 1865.

Frank J. Barker, enlisted in Co. C, 118th Ill. Reg., Aug., 1862; died at Milliken's Bend, La., April, 1863, aged 19.

Eben Barker, enlisted in Co. F, 50th Ill. Reg., Aug., 1861; died at Quincy, Ill., Jan., 1862, aged 22.

Cyrus E. Barker, enlisted July, 1861, in Co. H, 13th Mass. Reg.; discharged Jan., 1863, for disability; afterwards enlisted in Co. C, 59th Mass. Reg. He was at the battle at Weldon Railroad; was taken prisoner, and after seven months was exchanged; died at Annapolis, Md., April, 1865, aged 22.

The names of Acton men who served in the War of the Rebellion, and who survived that war:

Colonel, William H. Chapman; Captains, Aaron C. Handley, Daniel Tuttle, Frank H. Whitcomb; Lieutenants, Silas P. Blodgett, Henry Brown, Aaron S. Fletcher, Elias E. Haynes, Isaiah Hutchins, George Willard Knights, James Moulton, George W. Rand, William F. Wood; Privates, Frank W. Ames, George T. Ames, George E. Barker, John F. Blood, Charles H. Blood, George F. Blood, William H. Boss, Henry L. Bray, Daniel R. Briggs, Charles A. Brooks, Samuel R. Burroughs, Hiram Butten, Patrick Callahan, George Fay Campbell, Waldo Chaplin, William Chaplin, Jr., William D. Clark, Robert C. Conant, Simon T. Conant, J. Sherman Conant, John Conway, George B. Cran, John B. Cran, Waldo G. Dunn, Oscar Dwelley, Abel Farrar, Jr., Daniel H. Farrar, Winthrop H. Faulkner, James W. Fiske, John W. Fitzpatrick, Charles W. Fletcher, Aaron J. Fletcher, Ephraim B. Forbush, Chauncey U. Fuller, Meldon S. Giles, Henry Gilson, Nathan Goss, William B. Gray, William H. Gray, Delette H. Hall, George Handley, Charles Handley, William S. Handley, Abram Handley, Charles A. Hanscom, Marshall Hapgood, Henry Hapgood, Francis E. Harris, Forestus D. K. Hoar, J. Sherman Hoar, Walter O. Holden, Gilman S. Hosmer, Judson A. Huggins, Eri Huggins, Jr., Sylvanus Hunt, Loring M. Jackson, Mortimer Johnson, George A. Jones, Edwin A. Jones, Charles Jones, George Jones, Richard Kinsley, Jonathan W. Loker, Emory D. Lothrop, Lewis J. Masten, William Morrill, Charles Morse, Charles H. Moulton, Albert Moulton, Augustus P. Newton, George B. Parker, Henry D. Parlin, George E. Peck, George N. Pierce, George M. Pike, Michael Powers, Oscar E. Preston, John Putnam, William Reed, Levi H. Robbins, Joseph N. Robbins, Elbridge J. Robbins, Luke J. Robbins, Varnum F. Robbins, Albert Rouillard, George Rouillard, George W. Sawyer, Andrew J. Sawyer, George H. Simpson, Benjamin Skinner, Dennis Shehan, Luke Smith, George D. Smith, Silas M. Stetson, Emory A. Symonds, Edwin B. Taft, Edwin Tarbell, Daniel G. Taylor, Warren L. Teel, Daniel L. Veasey, Robert Wayne, John Wayne, James Wayne, Hiram W. Wetherbee, Addison B. Wheeler, Lincoln E. Wheeler, Everett Wheeler, William F. B. Whitney, Samuel E. Wilson, James H. Wood, Eben F. Wood, Charles H. Young.

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.—This church and society was launched upon its mission amid great religious commotion. The times were full of sharp and heated controversy upon doctrinal points. The lines were rigidly drawn, and neutrals were at a discount.

The worship was first in a chapel, built for the purpose, now occupied by Mr. Julian Tuttle. This was the scene of many earnest gatherings. It was where Mr. Woodbury began his most effective preaching, and it being a time when all this section of country was marked by great religious awakenings, the events are easily recalled by those still living, cotemporaneous with those early dates.

The church was organized by a council March 13, 1832, and a house of worship fifty by forty-four feet, built the next year. Many of the important members of the old church united with the new in its first formation. Rev. James Trask Woodbury was ordained and installed March 13, 1832. After preaching twenty years, he was dismissed at his own request June 23, 1852, and was afterwards settled in Milford, Massachusetts, where he died January 15, 1861, aged fifty-eight years.

Rev. Benjamin Dodge, of Wilton, Maine, was his successor. He was installed October 28, 1852, and dismissed April 17, 1855.

Until September, 1855, the church was supplied by Rev. Messrs. Alvord and Francis Horton.

Rev. Charles Rockwell then commenced his labors as a stated supply. On his leaving in July, 1856, Rev. Martin Moore, of Boston, and others, supplied the pulpit until January, 1857, when Rev. Joseph Garland was hired two years.

From January, 1859, to May of the same year the pulpit was supplied by various clergymen.

Rev. Alpha Morton was then engaged for four years successively, resigning May 1, 1863, to accept an engagement with the church at West Auburn, Maine.

Rev. George Coleman was ordained and installed November 12, 1863, and was dismissed in May, 1869.

The Rev. Franklin P. Wood was ordained July 24, 1871, and installed as pastor October 10, 1872, and dismissed December 17, 1874.

During Rev. Mr. Woodbury's pastorate two houses of worship were erected.

The following is a description of the present house as found in the church records in Mr. Woodbury's handwriting:

"1847, January 1st. The new meeting house erected on the spot where stood the former one was duly dedicated to Almighty God, Son and Holy Ghost, Dec. 16, 1846, Wednesday at one o'clock P.M. House 75 feet by 50, with a basement story of stone with 82 pews; Cost about $6000, exclusive of the fresco painting of the interior and the cushions, carpets, lamps, clock, communion table and chairs, Bible and hymn books, which all cost $700, and were all absolute gifts to the church and the house, not to be put upon the pews.

"The building Committee were: Dr. J. M. Miles, Samuel Hosmer (2d), Simon Tuttle, John P. Buttrick, Col. Winthrop E. Faulkner, and they did their duty faithfully and are entitled to the lasting gratitude of the church."

More than six hundred different persons have been members of this church.

Some repairs and alterations were made in the early part of 1867, and a fine organ introduced at a cost of $1320. The deacons and officers of this church, have been as follows: Deacons Silas Hosmer and Phineas Wheeler, died in 1838, aged sixty-five, chosen at the organization; Deacon Hosmer died in 1872, eighty years old; Deacon Stevens Hayward, chosen April 3, 1835, died in 1868, aged eighty-one; Deacon John Fletcher, chosen December 7, 1838, died in 1879, aged eighty-nine; Deacon Abraham Conant, chosen February 3, 1843, died in 1861, aged seventy-seven; Deacon John White, chosen February 3, 1843, died in 1860, aged seventy-five; and Deacon Samuel Hosmer, Albert Hayward, William W. Davis, and Joel F. Hayward, chosen January 1, 1864.

March, 1885, William Davis Tuttle chosen. He has been superintendent of the Sabbath School, also Deacon Davis.

Rev. George M. Stearns is the present pastor, installed September 23, 1887.

Deacon Silas Hosmer was clerk of the church from its organization to his death.

Rev. James T. Woodbury was born in Francestown, New Hampshire, May 9, 1803, and died at Milford, Massachusetts, January 16, 1861, aged fifty-eight. He married Miss Augusta Porter, of Medford, daughter of Jonathan Porter. His father, Honorable Peter Woodbury, was a pioneer merchant, and for many years a practical farmer in the upper division of old Hillsborough County. His father was distinguished through his whole life for his strong, plain, common sense, great energy of character, as well as for his uncompromising integrity. He was for a great many years a member of one or the other branches of the New Hampshire Legislature, commencing almost with the first session after the adoption of the Constitution by that State and being at the time of his death a member of the Senate. His father and his mother, whose maiden-name was also Woodbury, were of different distantly related families of Beverly, of this State, and they could both trace their origin to the ancient town of Woodbury, in Devonshire, England. His mother was a woman of rare ability. James T. Woodbury was a younger brother of Honorable Levi Woodbury, an eminent jurist and popular and able public officer, for years a judge of the United States Supreme Court. There were twelve children. James T. was graduated at Harvard University in 1823. He began a course of legal studies under the direction of his distinguished brother at Portsmouth, New Hampshire; was admitted to the bar in his native state in 1826. He at once opened an office for practice as a lawyer in Bath, Grafton County, New Hampshire. No young man for many years had come to the bar with fairer prospects. With a thorough education, with talents of the highest order, with an unblemished character, with great natural physical and in-



REV. JAMES T. WOODBURY.



tellectual powers, married to an amiable and highly accomplished wife, beloved by a large circle of friends, all looked that he should rival the fame of his elder brother, who had even then reached the highest honors within the gift of his native State. But in the midst of his apparent worldly prosperity his ambition was suddenly checked and his whole course of life was suddenly changed. Under the preaching of the Rev. Mr. Sutherland, a Scotch clergyman of Bath, familiarly known as Father Sutherland, he became a sincere convert to the religious creed in which he had been educated by his pious and excellent mother. After a long struggle with himself, and against the advice and remonstrances of many friends, he relinquished his profession as a lawyer, and all his hopes and dreams of future greatness and worldly glory, and devoted himself to a course of theological studies. As soon as this course was completed he was ordained over the Evangelical Church in Acton, where he remained from 1832 to 1852, when he became a pastor of the church in Milford, and remained a pastor till the time of his death.

No person could stand for twenty years in any community, holding the relations which were held by Mr. Woodbury in Acton, without making a deep impression upon the public mind. He had a personal presence, traits of character, mental peculiarities and forces, which took him out of the ordinary line of influence, so that when he left town, not the parish simply, but the whole community and neighboring towns felt the change.

By a large majority this change was lamented and is to this day, even by some who were his opponents while here.

As a preacher Mr. Woodbury was especially noted. Why so noted? It was not because of his rare theological training. In this he was confessedly deficient, and at times even boasted of the fact that he had not been to Andover, or any of the other celebrated schools of the day. It was not because he had a natural theological acumen, which would supplement the deficiency of school discipline. His most ardent admirers admitted this, and some were glad of it. It was not because of his labored preparations for the Sabbath effort. Few have carried into the pulpit preparations apparently so meagre. His discourses were seldom written, and when partially so, were for some cause the least effective. He had simply the lawyer's brief, a small bit of paper, which none but himself could decipher, and he with difficulty at times.

But he had a large, commanding person—a characteristic of the Woodbury family. He had a clear-ringing, variable voice, which he could modulate to any circumstances, grave or comic, to any audience-room, large or small. He had a quick, susceptible nature which flooded his face with tears, sometimes of tender sympathy and sorrow, of sudden humor or contagious passion. He would cry when others had no thought of it. It was all the same to him. He had a rare gift of descriptive narrative. Not often did he finish a discourse, however impressive, without telling some anecdotes which, told in his blunt, quaint style, would raise a smile through the house and cause one to look to his neighbor as if to say, "That is just like him and nobody else." He had a fondness for nature in all her varied forms, human nature not excepted, which, bubbling up like water from a living spring, gave a freshness to his words and sentiments and bearing before an audience.

There was a frankness and boldness and what some would call a rashness in uttering his convictions which provoked approval and opposition, and he did not seem to care which. People gave him credit for meaning what he said, even if they did not agree with him.

His emotional conception of every subject which he treated, whether in the pulpit or on the platform, gave him a power which he wielded with wonderful effect on great occasions.

The monument which stands upon our village green never would have graced the spot nor extended the patriotic fame of the town but for his memorable address to the Legislature.

His only enkindled emotions transferred into the membership of the House thrilled them for a moment into a patriotic ecstasy.

They could hear again the rattle of the musketry at the North Bridge, and the shriek of Captain Davis as he fell at the head of the advancing column.

The 19th of April was back with all its paraphernalia of stir and fire and blood.

In this gush of excitement it was easy for them to vote *yea* when they had thought and purposed to vote *nay* on the appropriation.

As a reformer Mr. Woodbury's gifts were conspicuous on the platform. His humor and pathos and passion and wit, his bluntness, quaintness and oddities, his independent honesty and high purpose gave him at one time a foremost rank as an anti-slavery and temperance advocate.

In all the region around about and in many distant places his efforts when in happiest moods will be remembered as sparkling with telling points and a burning oratory.

The whole town revived under his manly strokes. The houses and farms and shops and roads and schools, which had languished under the blight of intemperance now took on a new lease of prosperity.

Many a man headed for the drunkard's grave reversed his steps, thanks to Mr. Woodbury's eloquent appeal. Peace be to his ashes!

His oft-repeated wish to be buried in Acton, with the dear people to whom he had ministered in the buoyancy and strength of his best years, has been gratified. He sleeps in Woodlawn Cemetery, by the granite shaft which he erected in memory of his beloved son, James Trask, Jr., by the side of his Augusta, as he was wont so fondly always to call her,

the companion, stay and grace of his entire married life.

Extracts from an ordination charge by Mr. Woodbury to a young pastor:

"My Son, I have begotten you in the Gospel, so I call you my son.

"My Son. 1st. Get your sermons from the Bible, the closet and the fields.

"2d. Be brief. You are a short man and the people will not expect long sermons from you, my Son. Unless you deem yourself a very eloquent man. Be brief! be brief!

"3d. If it rains, *let it rain!* The rain may do good. If you try to stop it, it may rain so much the harder. My Son, *let it rain!*

"4th. Throw physic to the dogs! They may not like, but they might as well have it as you. You don't need it. Air, exercise, good food and plenty of it, are better than physic. Let the dogs have it.

"5th. Trust in God and keep your powder dry. If your powder is wet it will not be of any use. Trust in God, but you must have dry powder or your shooting will not hit the mark. My son, God bless you and your people. AMEN."

Reminiscences.—One hot summer morning in July, quite early in the day, there was heard a loud shouting from a carriage which had stopped in the street opposite: "I say! I *say!!* I *say!!!*

Hurrying to the door, Mr. Woodbury, of Acton, some thirty miles distant, was recognized sitting in the carriage alone, stripped all but his pants and shirt. He was not expected. His first salutation was, "I say! *have you any milk?*" other questions followed, but the first thing to be settled was *milk;* he was thirsty.

Why Mr. Woodbury liked to live outside the village. "Because," he said, "he could shout as loud as he pleased without disturbing his neighbors."

Why he wore a broad-brimmed hat, loose-fitting coat and pants of blue color, carried a blue umbrella, instead of black, had boots with sole leather projecting a half-inch beyond the upper leather, drove his oxen through the village in a farmer's frock, with pants in his boots. Because he had a mind to.

Why he liked the Acton choir. Because it was a large choir and made up of ladies as well as gentlemen, and *Augusta* stood for years a prominent and graceful singer among them. He got tired of this all gander music when in college.

Deacon John Fletcher was born in Acton July 21, 1790, and died July 16, 1879, in his ninetieth year. He was the son of James, the son of Timothy, the son of Timothy, the son of Samuel, the son of Francis, the son of Robert, who came from England to Concord, Mass., in 1630, when thirty-eight years of age. He was at the time of his death the oldest person in Acton. He was nine years of age when George Washington died, and remembered distinctly the sensation which that event made throughout the country. In his boyhood all the territory west of the Hudson was a wilderness.

He married Clarissa Jones, the youngest of eleven children, all but one of whom lived to mature life, whose father was Aaron Jones. She died in her seventy-sixth year (February 8th), after being married over fifty years, the mother of seven children. He united with the church, together with his wife, November 3, 1833, and was for many years one of its deacons.

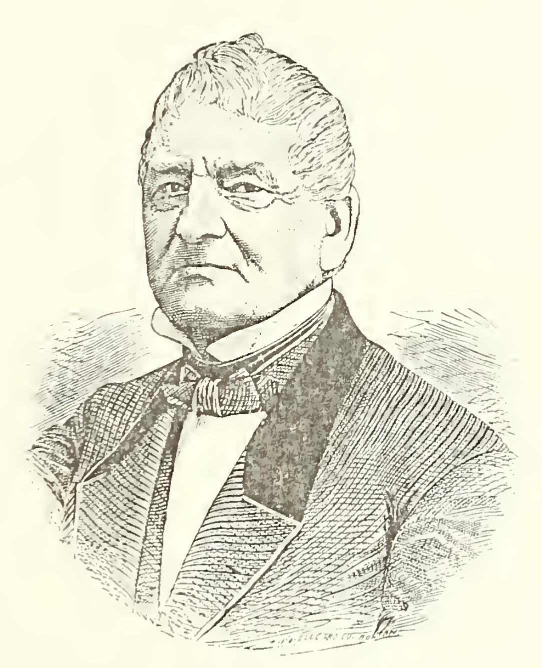
In his early life he was captain of the Davis Blues, and was familiarly called Captain Fletcher. He was clerk of the company when it went to Boston in the War of 1812. He held the office of special commissioner for Middlesex County for several years. He was for a long period of years the veteran boot and shoe manufacturer of this region, and in company with his sons, John and Edwin, carried on the business up to the time of his decease. He was conscientious in his dealings with his patrons, stamped his name upon his work, and made it good, if at any time there was a failure. He was largely interested in the general appearance of the Common, in the planting of the noble elms which now give dignity and beauty to the village, and but for his exertions and those of Francis Tuttle, Esq., they would have perished in the severe drought of 1840, after they were set out. He was interested in the erection of the public buildings of the Centre.

After his former shoe-factory and the old church, which was used as a town hall, were burnt, he encouraged the town to rebuild on the old site a new and commodious structure, offering to rebuild a shoe-factory which should be an ornament to the place, which he did as promised.

As early as 1815 he began an industry in the town, which, till within a few years, was of great advantage to the material interests. He early espoused the temperance cause, and became an earnest advocate of the principles of anti-slavery. His ardent support of the temperance cause cost the loss of a valuable orchard in 1843—destroyed by the girdling of his trees—and the same was repeated upon him a few years afterwards. When he became convinced that a certain course was right he gave himself to it heart and hand, with but little regard to the consequences to himself. In 1828 he, with his brother James, built the homestead, which till recently remained on the site now occupied by the Memorial Library.

Simon Hapgood died in Acton December 21st, aged eighty-six years and ten months. He was one of the original founders of the Congregational Society, was for nearly forty years an exemplary member of the church, and for many years a teacher in the Sabbath-school; was one of the earliest advocates of temperance and emancipation, and was always identified with that which is for the best good of the community and the world at large.

Deacon W. W. Davis was born in Harvard March, 1824; came to Acton April, 1861. He married Martha Taylor, of Boston, April 7, 1853. She died December 8, 1868. Children: William and Ada. He has taught school eighteen terms. In 1861 he represented the towns of Boxboro', Littleton, Carlisle and Acton in the State Legislature, being what was called the War Session. August 3, 1882, he married Abby



DEA. JOHN FLETCHER.



R. Worthiley, of Andover. He has been selectman of Acton, two years; School Committee superintendent, three years; Sabbath-school superintendent, fifteen years; deacon of the Congregational Church since 1862. In politics the deacon has been uniformly a Republican. He has been a hard-working man, greatly improving his farm and lifting from himself burdens which at the beginning he had to assume.

Hon. John Fletcher was the son of Deacon John Fletcher; born in 1827. He was of the firm of John Fletcher & Sons till his father's death, in 1879. Since then he has been in the firm of S. T. Fletcher & Co., with his son, Silas Taylor, at 77 Clinton Street, Boston. The business is that of butter and eggs commission store. Though retiring in his habits, he has taken an active interest in public affairs, in parish, town and country. He has been chorister twenty years; representative to General Court in 1862; in the State Senate two years (1870–71); a director in the Lowell and Nashua Railroad; president of the Schubert Choral Union since its organization; superintendent of the cemeteries; on the Executive Committee of the village improvement, and prominent in his activities for the home support of the Civil War. He married Martha Taylor, daughter of Silas Taylor.

Universalists.—The following extracts from an able sermon preached by Rev. I. C. Knowlton, D.D., at the dedication of the new meeting-house at South Acton (1878) are given. In a recent note from Dr. Knowlton he adds, "I send you the missing links in your sketch of our folks in Acton. I spent much time and labor in preparing the sermon from which you copy; I cannot go over the ground again. I think its statements are all correct."

The first Universalist sermons were preached in Acton by Rev. Hosea Ballard as early as 1814 or 1815.

January 19, 1816, the first Universalist Society of Acton was organized, consisting of eleven members.

In 1821 and 1822 Rev. Dr. Benjamin Whittemore preached one-half the Sabbaths in Acton in halls, school-houses and private residences.

January 27, 1821, the First Universalist Society of Acton was legally incorporated. It consisted of fifty paying members, two years after of sixty-one and eventually of over eighty paying members.

December 17, 1833, a church of thirty-nine members was formed as the result of the labors of Rev. Joseph Wright, who, that year, became pastor of this society.

October 4, 1834, the Boston Association of Universalists met at Acton. During the next six years the religious services were in the First Parish Church and well attended.

June 29, 1836, Rev. Isaac Brown became the resident minister of the society and continued in this relation three years.

July 4, 1837, Rev. Isaac Brown was formally installed as pastor of this church with appropriate services.

In 1842 an attempt was made to resuscitate the First Parish by uniting all the elements not affiliating with the Evangelical Church. At about this time there was a Methodist Church organized and there was Methodist preaching for a few years.

About 1850 our interest there, at Acton Centre, peacefully expired.

From 1850–58 there was no regular Universalist preaching in Acton. In 1858 halls were provided in South and West Acton, and Rev. J. M. Usher preached in these two places for a period of six years. The parishes in South Acton and West Acton, although entirely separate, were started at the same time and have always worked together in perfect harmony. The same pastors have officiated in each place. Rev. J. M. Usher, an energetic and well-read man, was really the founder of both.

After the retirement of Mr. Usher, in 1864, Rev. Edwin Davis became pastor of both these societies and continued until April, 1872; Rev. W. W. Harward, three years; Rev. N. P. Smith, one year. Rev. I. C. Knowlton, D.D., assumed his charge in October, 1875, fifteen years, and is still occupying the pulpits, with acceptance, in his seventy-first year.

In 1868 the West Acton Society built, furnished and paid for a very pretty and pleasant meeting-house, which it has used and greatly enjoyed ever since.

In 1861 the South Acton Society moved into Exchange Hall, a large and handsome auditorium, where it worshiped for seventeen years.

In the spring of 1876 a church of more than thirty members was organized at West Acton. Present number of members, about sixty in all.

On February 21, 1878, a handsome and completely furnished church edifice was dedicated, with appropriate services, at South Acton.

Each parish, at the date of this writing, though depleted by the removal of many of its young people to city centres, is enjoying a fair state of prosperity. Each meeting-house is pleasant and convenient, kept in good repair and occupied every Sunday.

The Baptists.—The Baptist Church is located at West Acton. It was organized July 10, 1846, with a membership of twenty-three persons. The present membership is over one hundred; the average congregations 200. The Sabbath-school has always been a flourishing adjunct of the church, now numbering one hundred and fifty. They have an attractive meeting-house, located centrally in the village, with all the modern contrivances to promote the interest and profit of the worshipers. They have a large and instructive library connected with the society, adapted to give general culture as well as religious instruction. The following is a list of the pastors and the length of their pastorates: Rev. Horace Richardson, seven years; Rev. W. H. Watson, seven years; Rev. Jacob Tuck (2d), three years; Rev. W. K. Davis, five years; Rev. J. C. Boomer, four years; Rev. J. R. Haskins.

Rev. C. L. Rhoades came to the West Acton Baptist Church, as its pastor, from the Lexington Church. He was a man of great enthusiasm, and during his pastorate of four and one-half years his hands were filled with work. He resigned in January, 1888, to go to the Fourth Street Church, of South Boston.

Rev. Frank A. Heath came direct from Hamilton Theological Seminary and was ordained June 7, 1888. He is now in the midst of his work, with able and liberal assistants in active co-operation, and with high hopes of a success in the future exceeding any record of the past. Their first meeting-house, dedicated July 19, 1847, was burned July 2, 1853; their second meeting-house was dedicated September 19, 1854.

Daniel Wetherbee, Esq. (East Acton).—Few men have held a more prominent position in Central Middlesex. From his youth he was acknowledged as a leader. His early education commenced and was continued in the old tavern situated on the "Great Road" from Fitchburg to Boston, of which he became proprietor in later years. Wetherbee's Tavern was known from the Canada line to our metropolis, and was a temporary Mecca of drovers and drivers of baggage-wagons for more than half a century preceding the advent of railroads.

The small stream running through his ancestral domains he at once improved and enlarged, till Wetherbee's Mills comprised one of the most important points in the illustrated map of the county. Of public life he had his full share. He was town clerk, assessor and selectman for many years, and five years a representative to the Legislature. He was largely instrumental in establishing the State Prison at Concord Junction. He became one of the originators of the Lowell and Framingham Railroad, and a permanent director. He married Clarissa Jones, daughter of Abel Jones. He died July 6, 1883, aged sixty-eight years, leaving a widow and seven children.

The American Powder-Mills.—These mills, incorporated under the laws of Massachusetts, having their business office in Boston, are located in the corner of four towns—Acton, Sudbury, Maynard and Concord. They cover an area of 401 acres. The capital is $300,000. The annual production is in the range of $240,000.

These mills were started by Nathan Pratt, in 1835, and they were run by him till 1864; then the property was sold to the American Powder Company, and that company was formed by the union of Massachusetts Powder-Mills, located at Barre, Mass., and incorporated under the name of the American Powder Company, 1864.

They did a very successful business, and went out of business in 1883, and were succeeded by the American Powder-Mills. About sixty men are employed at the present time. They are doing a large and successful business.

The patriotic emergencies of Acton have always had at hand a bountiful supply of the very choicest quality of powder, and at reasonable rates.

South Acton.—Fifty years ago the principal business at South Acton was done at the Faulkner Saw and Grist-Mill.

The houses within a quarter of a mile of the depot were those of the tavern, for many years the residence of Aaron Jones; the house of Abel Jones, his son, across the road opposite, on the hill, and that of Col. Faulkner.

Besides these there was a small school-house, a few barns, cooper-shops, stables and out-buildings. Now there are over a hundred pleasant residences, a number of mills, stores and factories, a fine church, assembly hall, chapel, a commodious school-house, large store structures, railroad facilities for traffic and travel, and a village noted for its comfort and neighborly and social culture.

Tuttle, Jones & Wetherbee.—On the rise of ground facing the Fitchburg Railway track stands the central structure of the vicinity—the hub of trade for years of this section of country. This firm is composed of these gentlemen, in the order of their connection with it: James Tuttle, Varnum Tuttle, sons of Francis Tuttle, Esq.; Elnathan Jones, a grandson of Aaron Jones, and J. K. W. Wetherbee, each marrying sisters of James and Varnum. No other than these have ever been in the partnership. The present name was adopted February 8, 1867, when Mr. Wetherbee was admitted. Mr. Jones joined about 1852, and between these dates it was James Tuttle & Co. From 1843 to 1852 it was J. & V. Tuttle. James Tuttle began trade on his own account in 1839. A year or so here and three at Acton Centre, and he was ready to start with his brother at the South Village, which had just been reached by a railroad from Boston. Then the lower part of the building now occupied by jeweler Baldwin was constructed, a single story, with its basement, for the beginning of these operations. The house of Mr. James Tuttle is to the rear of this enlarged structure. These young men of twenty-five and twenty-one started with good pluck and with a will to succeed, but with little idea of the possibilities of their future. The railroad terminus was then at West Acton. All things seemed at the time to favor that village. Long after they started no little trade went past them to the prosperous concern of Burbeck & Tenney. That was then called Horse-power Village, and this nothing but Mill-corner, where merged a half-dozen roads from Boxboro', Acton Centre, Westford, Sudbury and Stow. That was a stage, this only a saw and grist-mill centre.

In a few years they won the good start which is half the battle.

In those early days they did a business of $25,000 per year. This gradually grew until it reached a quarter of a million, with appliances to match the growth. In 1850 they moved to their new store on

the site of the present grocery. This building consisted of basement, a full story above and an attic floor. Shed, carriage-house and barn stretched from it back along the Concord pike.

James Tuttle has always been a shrewd and jolly helmsman, and when he set his craft on these waters he was bound to steer straight to the destined port. This store was burned January 20, 1866. Within a year the restored building was ready for a new launch, and it has floated safely on its way ever since.

The large dry-goods store on the hill was built in 1860. It is 70 by 38, and 60 feet high, with a central tower on front.

Exchange Hall, up three flights from the ground at front, has been devoted to public uses from the outset. The Universalists worshiped there until the new church was occupied in February, 1878. Every sort of gathering and entertainment has been held within its walls. Its dances, socials, concerts, lectures, campaign meetings, caucuses and conventions have made it well and widely known.

The prosperity of the firm rests upon its equity, Yankee sagacity and thrift. The gentlemen connected with it, many and various, stand high in the regard of their fellow-townsmen. The senior, Mr. James Tuttle, has been selectman, assessor, overseer of the poor, chairman of committee for building school-house, church and other public buildings. Mr. Jones has been prominent in town affairs. Mr. Varnum Tuttle has been a stanch pillar of the chapel enterprise. Mr. Wetherbee has been for fifteen years postmaster at Acton, town treasurer for years, which office he still holds; selectman for many years, and trustee and executor of many private estates.

J. W. Tuttle & Sons.—Mr. Joseph Warren Tuttle, brother to Francis Tuttle, Esq., was the senior member of this house, and lived in one of the finest mansions at South Acton. The business is a wholesale commission-merchant's for the sale of all kinds of country produce; office, No. 16 and 18 Clinton Street, Boston. An honorable and successful career of forty-five years has given the house a high standing in the great thoroughfares of trade. The business was founded in 1843 by J. W. Tuttle.

In 1848 Mr. George W. Tuttle was admitted to partnership, in 1874 Charles Jones, in 1875 Charles H. Tuttle, and 1883 Herbert A. Tuttle.

J. A. Bowen.—The shoddy enterprise at South Acton, now in charge of Mr. Bowen, is one of importance. The privilege and land were first obtained of Abel Jones for a woolen-mill during the war, by S. S. Richardson, by whom the first dam was erected. The amount of the shoddy and extract productions for a year is now estimated in the vicinity of $100,000 per year. The business has been profitable and employs over thirty hands. Mr. Bowen, the proprietor, is a gentleman of quiet habits, of enfeebled health, yet an intelligent, reputable and liberal citizen of the village, whose enterprise in the successful management of the interest, and whose generous contributions in the way of public improvement are appreciated by the community.

Charles Augustus Harrington.—He was born in Shrewsbury, Worcester County, Mass., December 22, 1814, where he lived the first thirty years. He married, May 31, 1866, Mary J. Faulkner, daughter of Colonel Winthrop E. Faulkner. He came from Wisconsin to Acton in 1867, and has resided in town most of the time since. Though interested in public affairs he has never sought or held official positions of responsibility except to act as assessor for Acton four years. He is an earnest Republican in politics and liberal in his support of enterprises for the benefit of the community. He has been largely instrumental in giving to South Acton its new impetus towards a prosperity exceeding all previous records. He built his own elegant mansion which overlooks towards the west, the Faulkner house and the water scenery of the "Big Brook," and the fine mansion recently built on the western and northern slopes of the village; the retreating low-lands of the New England settlement are also seen in the distance, with clusters of comely dwelling-houses.

The thirty daily incoming and departing trains which pass on the Fitchburg Railroad help the effectiveness of this panorama of beauty as seen from the windows of Mr. Harrington's home. He has rebuilt and enlarged the Faulkner Mills, put in an ice-house, store-house, barn and an elevator for the flour and grain business at an expense of $17,000. He rebuilt the piano-stool factory which was burnt November 9, 1886, putting in steam at an expense of $10,000. The estimated productions of this factory, run by Mr. Chadwick, annually are $75,000, which are shipped to all States east of the Mississippi and to Canada.

At the grain and flour-mills, now in charge of F. J. Hastings & Hezzleton, a very heavy business is now carried on. No place in this region has a more complete stock for feed, fertilizing, garden seeds, farming tools; flour comes in and goes out by the car-load. It is the heaviest grain business between Waltham and Fitchburg; estimated annual amount, $150,000.

The Acton Light Infantry was organized in 1805 and then consisted of forty-one members, including officers. The following gentlemen previous to 1830 commanded this company: Paul Brooks, Simon Hosmer, Abijah Hayward, Silas Jones, James Jones, Aaron Hayward, Jonathan Hosmer, John Fletcher, John Handley, Jr., Simon Davis, Abel Furbush, George W. Tuttle and Thomas Brown.

The following is the list of town clerks: Thomas Wheeler, 1735–36; Simont Hunt 1737–43; Jonathan Hosmer, 1744–55; John Davis, Jr., 1756–57; Jonathan Hosmer, 1758–61; Francis Faulkner, 1762–96; Aaron Jones, 1797; John Edwards, 1798–99; David Barnard, 1800–07; John Robbins, 1808–17; Joseph Noyes, 1818; John Robbins, 1819–20; Joseph Noyes,

1821; Abraham Conant, 1822; Francis Tuttle, 1823–27; Silas Jones, 1828; Stevens Hayward, 1829; Francis Tuttle, 1830.

Deacon Ephraim Robbins and Asa Parlin, Esq., were of Carlisle when it was a district of Acton.

Captain Daniel Fletcher was chosen a delegate to the convention in Boston, 22d September, 1768; Francis Faulkner and Ephraim Hapgood to the Provincial Congress in Concord, October, 1774; Josiah Hayward to Cambridge, February, 1775, and again in May; Francis Faulkner to the convention in Cambridge, for forming the Constitution, September, 1779; Captain Joseph Robbins to the convention in Concord, to regulate the prices of articles of produce, etc., October, 1779; Simon Tuttle and Thomas Noyes to Concord 23d of May, 1786; and Asa Parlin to the convention in Boston in 1788, to ratify the Constitution of the United States.

REPRESENTATIVES.—Nathan Brooks, 1836, 1837, 1838, 1840; Phineas Harrington, 1841–42; Ivory Keyes, 1843, 1846; Daniel Wetherbee, 1844, 1845, 1848, 1853, 1857; Rev. James T. Woodbury, 1850–51; Moses Hayward, 1852; Joseph Noyes, 1854; Aaron C. Handley, 1855, 1863; William D. Tuttle, 1856; John Fletcher, 1861; Luther Conant, 1866, 1886; George W. Gates, 1870; George C. Wright, 1873; Moses Taylor, 1881; Charles Wesley Parker, 1884; Aaron C. Handley, 1889; Daniel Fletcher, 1768; Josiah Hayward, 1774–75; Mark White, 1776; Simon Hunt, 1780; Francis Faulkner, 1782, 1785; Thomas Noyes, 1787, 1789; Ephraim Robbins, 1790; Jonas Brooks, 1791, 1802; Asa Parlin, 1803; Jonas Brooks, 1804; Samuel Jones, 1805–06; Jonas Brooks, 1807–11; Stevens Hayward, 1812; Joseph Noyes, 1813–18; Joseph Noyes, 1821; Francis Tuttle, 1823–27; Steven Hayward, 1828–29; Francis Tuttle, 1830–31.

Forty-four years during the ninety-five since incorporation the town was not represented in the General Court.

SENATORS.—Stevens Hayward, 1844, 1845; Winthrop E. Faulkner, 1853, 1854; John Fletcher, 1870, 1871.

TOWN CLERKS.—Francis Tuttle, Esq., 1830–32, 1834, 1835; Silas Jones, 1832–33; J. W. Tuttle, 1836, 1838; Daniel Wetherbee, 1839–54; William D. Tuttle, 1855.

GRADUATES OF COLLEGE.—*Nathan Davis*, son of Samuel Davis, born November 30, 1737; graduated at Harvard College 1759; ordained minister at Dracut 20th November, 1765; dismissed in 1785; removed to Boston and was appointed chaplain at Fort Independence, and a review officer; died March 4, 1803, aged 65.

John Swift, born November 18, 1741; graduated in 1762; settled as a physician in Acton; died in 1775.

Asa Piper, son of Josiah Piper; graduated in 1778, and was ordained at Wakefield, New Hampshire, 1785; was a retired pastor in that place after leaving his pastoral charge.

Solomon Adams, son of Lieutenant John Adams; born March 18, 1761; graduated in 1788; ordained pastor at Middleton, October 23, 1793; died September, 1813, aged 53.

Daniel Brooks, graduated in 1794; settled as a trader in Westmoreland, where he held the office of justice of the peace; died at Springfield, Vermont.

Thomas Noyes, son of Thomas Noyes, born February 5, 1769; graduated in 1795; ordained pastor of Second Church in Needham, July 10, 1799; dismissed in 1833, after a faithful discharge of his official duties thirty-four years. To his clerical brethren he set an example of diligence, punctuality and perseverance. As a preacher he was respectable, grave and sincere, practical rather than doctrinal. He brought beaten oil into the sanctuary. He was a descendant of the Puritans and a consistent Congregationalist.

Luther Wright, born April 19, 1770; graduated in 1796; ordained pastor of the First Parish in Medway, June 13, 1798; dismissed September, 1815; installed at Barrington, Rhode Island, January 29, 1817; dismissed July 5, 1821; he resided at Holliston afterwards.

Moses Adams, son of Rev. Moses Adams; born November 28, 1777; graduated in 1797; settled as a physician in Ellsworth, Maine, and was sheriff of the county of Lincoln.

William Emerson Faulkner, son of Francis Faulkner, Esq.; born October 23, 1776; graduated 1797; read law with his brother-in-law, the Hon. Jabez Upham, of Brookfield, with whom he formed a partnership in business; he died October 1, 1804, aged 28, and left a most worthy character.

Josiah Adams, son of the Rev. Moses Adams; born November 3, 1781; graduated in 1801; read law with Thomas Heald, Esq.; was admitted to the bar, June, 1807, and settled in Framingham. He delivered the Centennial address in 1835.

Luther Faulkner, son of Francis Faulkner; born May 7, 1779; graduated in 1802; was a merchant in Boston.

Jonathan Edwards Scott, a native of Nova Scotia; a resident in Acton before he entered college; graduated in 1802; commanded a vessel at sea.

Joseph Adams, son of Rev. Moses Adams; born September 25, 1783; graduated in 1803; settled as an attorney in West Cambridge; died June 10, 1814.

John Ruggles Cutting, son of William Cutting; graduated at Dartmouth College, 1802; ordained at Waldoborough, Maine, August, 1807; dismissed March, 1812, and was afterwards a teacher of youth.

Henry Durant graduated at Yale College, 1828; was a tutor in Yale; all these, excepting the two first and the last, were prepared for college under Rev. Mr. Adams.

Rev. James Fletcher.—He was born in Acton, September 5, 1823, and was the son of Deacon John and Clarissa Jones Fletcher. He fitted for college at

Leicester Academy, Massachusetts, and New Ipswich Academy, New Hampshire. He graduated at Dartmouth College in 1843, at Andover Theological Seminary in 1846, and was a resident licentiate a year; pastor of the Maple Street Congregational Church, Danvers, fifteen years; principal of the Holten High School, Danvers, five years; of Lawrence Academy, Groton, six years; of Burr and Burton Seminary, Manchester, Vt., three years. He has taught forty-nine terms in all; been committeeman eighteen years and superintendent of schools six years. He married in Andover, Mass., October 10, 1849, Lydia Middleton, daughter of Rev. Henry Woodward, missionary to Ceylon, granddaughter of Prof. Bezaleel Woodward, of Dartmouth College, and adopted daughter of Hon. Samuel Fletcher, late of Concord, New Hampshire.

George G. Parker.—He was born in Acton, June 19, 1826. He was the oldest son of Asa Parker and Ann Margaret (McCaristone) Parker. He fitted for college at Lawrence Academy, Groton, and Appleton Academy, New Ipswich, N. H. He taught school in Acton and elsewhere. He graduated from Union College, New York, in 1852; studied law at the Albany Law School, New York, and was admitted to the bar of that State.

In 1856 he settled in Milford, Mass., and was admitted to the Worcester Co. bar, where he has since practiced. For many years he has been chairman of the Board of School Committee of Milford, senior warden of the Trinity Episcopal Church, Milford. In politics he was a Republican, but joined the Greeley party in 1872, was a member of the Cincinnati Convention of that year, and represented the Democratic party in the Legislature in 1876. December 26, 1854, he married the eldest daughter of Rev. James T. Woodbury, Augusta. Their child, Margaret Augusta, died at Milford in 1861.

William M. Parker, M.D.—He was born in Acton, June 15, 1828, son of Asa Parker and Ann Margaret (McCaristone) Parker. He acquired a thorough academical education, and entered the Berkshire Medical Institution at Pittsfield, and graduated in 1853. He practiced in Shutesbury about five years. He there served as a member of the School Committee. From 1856 to 1860 he was surgeon of the Tenth Regiment of Massachusetts militia. In 1858 he removed to Milford, and there followed his profession till his death, March 1, 1883. He was a member of the Massachusetts Medical Society and of the Massachusetts Medico-Legal Society, and at the time of his decease was State Medical Examiner in Worcester County. He was married June 25, 1872, to Miss Emma T. Day, whose death preceded his own by about six months. He left his only child, Lillian Blanche, to Mr. and Mrs. George G. Parker, by whom she was adopted. The Milford historian, Mr. Ballou, speaks of his social standing as being in accord with the doctor's eminence as a physician and citizen.

Hon. Henry L. Parker.—He was born in Acton. He was the son of Asa Parker and Ann Margaret (McCaristone) Parker. He graduated at Dartmouth College in 1856. He was admitted to the bar of Worcester County in 1859, and commenced the practice of law at Hopkinton, Mass., and was trial justice for about three years; removed to Worcester in 1865, where he has been in practice since.

In 1886 and 1887 he was representative to the General Court from Worcester. In 1886 he was a member of Committee on Probate and on Drainage. In 1887 he was chairman of Committee on Probate. In 1889 and 1890 he was Senator from the First Worcester Senatorial District. In 1889 he was member of Judiciary Committee and chairman of Public Service. In 1890 he was appointed chairman of the following Committees: Judiciary, Rules, Election Laws and Special Elections. In Worcester was six years a member of the School Board. For the past two years he has been president of the Worcester County Horticultural Society and senior warden of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, also member of the Board of Associated Charities.

Rev. Ephraim Hapgood, son of John and Clara Hapgood, graduated at Brown University in 1874, pursued theological studies at Newton Theological Seminary; was settled in Seward City, Nebraska.

Rev. Josiah W. Brown graduated at Dartmouth and Andover Theological Seminary.

Edward F. Sherman.—Born at Southeast Acton, graduated at Dartmouth College in 1843, and practiced law in Lowell. The mills at Southeast Acton called the Sherman Mills.

Luther Jones, M.D.—He was the son of Silas Jones, and graduated at Dartmouth College in 1841.

Eben H. Davis.—He was born in Acton, 1840. He was the son of Eben Davis. He graduated at Kimball Union Academy in 1857, and at Dartmouth College in 1861. He took a course at the Harvard Law School, and then entered upon his life-work, that of teaching. He was principal of the Belmont High School, and was then elected, in 1869, superintendent of the schools in Nashua, N. H., where he remained a year and a half, when he resigned and became the superintendent of the schools in Woburn, which position he held for thirteen years, and has been superintendent of the schools in Chelsea six years. He has made a specialty of primary methods in teaching, has written for educational magazines, both in the South and in the Northeast, has lectured in several States at Institutes, and is now editing a series of readers, in behalf of the Lippincott Publishers.

Julian A. Mead, M.D.—He was born in Acton; the son of Oliver W. Mead. He was fitted for college at Exeter, N. H; graduated at Harvard College and Harvard Medical School: studied over two years in the medical schools and colleges of Europe, and is now in active practice in Watertown, Mass.

George Herman Tuttle, son of George Tuttle; pre-

pared for college at Concord High School; graduated at Harvard, 1887; has been one year at the Medical University of Pennsylvania; one year at Harvard Medical School.

Frederick Brooks Noyes, son of T. Frederick Noyes, has graduated from Andover Theological Seminary, and nearly completed his course at Harvard University.

PHYSICIANS.—*Dr. John Swift*, son of the minister, was the first physician.

Dr. Abraham Skinner was from Woodstock, Conn., and commenced practice in Acton in 1781, where he died, April 16, 1810, aged 53. He married Sarah, daughter of Francis Faulkner, Esq., 1788.

Dr. Peter Goodnow was from Bolton; commenced practice in Acton 12th October, 1812; left February 18, 1827, and was afterwards a merchant in Boston.

Dr. Bela Gardner resided here from 1823 to 1828; removed to Vermont.

Dr. Harris Cowdry, born at South Reading; graduated at the Berkshire Medical Institution, 1824; commenced practice in October, 1826.

Paul C. Kittridge, from Littleton, commenced practice in Acton August 30, 1830.

Harris Cowdry, M.D., was born at South Reading (now Wakefield), Mass., September 23, 1803. He studied with Dr. Hunt, of that place, and graduated at the Berkshire Medical School, Pittsfield, Mass.

At eighteen he applied himself to the vocation of a nurse, and in this work he acquired a taste for the medical profession. He entered upon this pursuit with the greatest enthusiasm. He grappled bravely with the obstacles that met him at the outset of his profession, and soon took a front rank.

In choosing a field for practice, several places were in mind. The fruits which abounded in Acton, even at that early date, attracted his notice, and here he determined to locate. Possibly, other attractions may have helped his decision, for, in due time, he found a helpful companion in Miss Abigail Davis, daughter of Eben Davis, a native of Acton. Here he practiced his profession for nearly half a century—nearly the average life of two generations.

The country in Acton and the adjacent towns is but sparsely populated, and his rides were long and fatiguing.

As a physician he was faithful and conscientious to all—both rich and poor. With the latter he was attentive and sympathizing, and in his charges lenient. The case of each patient he made an especial study. He was continually gathering up improved methods of practice from medical works and from the experience of friends, not allowing his mind to run in ruts.

As a general practitioner he excelled. Others in the profession may have been his superiors in some special branches, but for the varied work to which he was called, few have been his equals. As he entered the sick-room he brought a cheerful countenance and a happy style of conversation, inspiring confidence, both in the patient and attendants. He was fond of children, and apt in discovering and treating their ailments.

He was an early member of the Evangelical Church of Acton, and its firm supporter to the end. He was a reformer, zealous in the cause of temperance and anti-slavery.

He was interested in education; a superintendent of the schools sixteen years, and chairman of the School Committee at the time of his death. He was fond of music, and, however pressing his professional cares, seldom was he missed from the village choir, seldom even from the rehearsal.

He was an ardent patriot. As a specimen of the man at the outbreak of the Rebellion, his letter to Captain Daniel Tuttle, dated May 1, 1861, is here given:

"You can't tell what an anxious night we spent after the telegraph had flashed it up to South Acton that the Sixth Regiment had been attacked in Baltimore. We are proud of you, and, more than that, we are glad the friends of freedom the world over know of your noble bearing.

"We know if the South don't back down, and there comes a fight, the Davis Guards will do their duty bravely and well.

"If prayers and tears can help you, be assured you have them all. You never saw such a town-meeting as we had last Saturday. We are ready to do anything for the soldiers."

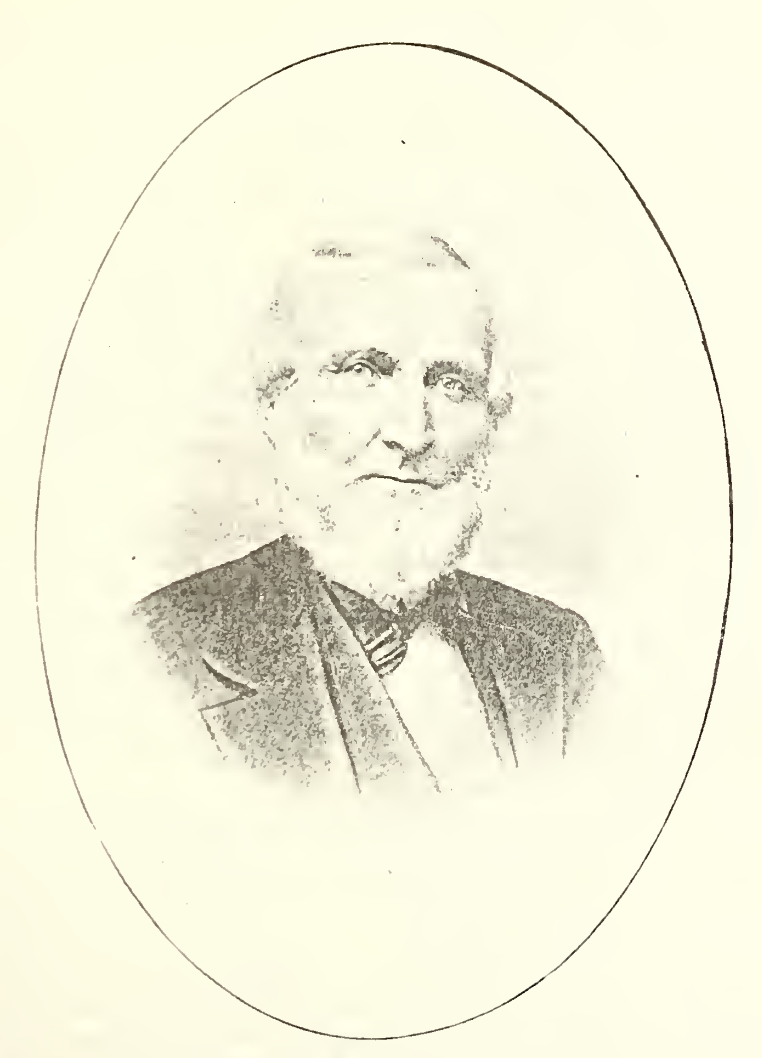
He was one of those few men who never grow old. He was in his seventy-third year during that last winter campaign. His locks were silvery, but his step was elastic, his eyes flashed with the fire of early manhood, and he dashed through the streets, on his way to the sick, whether the call came by day or night, in sunshine or storm.

He died, as he wished, with the harness on. That Centennial Day at old Concord, April 19, 1875, was too much for him. The severity of that raw, chilly day gave him a fatal attack of influenza, from which he died, after a short but painful sickness, May 6th.

More died from the exposures of that day than from the original 19th, a hundred years before, and Dr. Cowdry was one of these patriotic martyrs.

He had two children: Arthur H. Cowdry, a successful physician in Stoneham, Mass.; Mrs. Helen Little, widow of Charles Little, M.D., whose active professional life began in Acton in 1866, and his marriage to Dr. Cowdry's only daughter soon after, and his death at the age of thirty-three, after a promising but brief professional career.

Charles Little, M.D.—Dr. Little was born in Boscawen, N. H.; graduated at Dartmouth College in 1860, and received his medical degree in the same institution in 1863; died November 16, 1869, thirty-two years old. During the same autumn he entered the navy as assistant surgeon, where he remained until



DR. HARRIS COWDRY.



the close of the war. Unwilling to enter upon a private practice without a more thorough preparation for his work, he passed the winter of 1865–66 at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, and at the hospital in New York. He commenced his active professional life at Acton in the spring of 1866, and soon after married the only daughter of Dr. Harris Cowdry, of Acton.

Dr. Little was a good classical scholar, and had an excellent knowledge of the minutiæ of his profession. His practical career, though short, was long enough to give him a place in the confidence of the people, and betoken a useful and successful career. He was modest in his manners, but outspoken for the right. In the home circle he was best appreciated. He was a genial husband, brother and friend. His end was peaceful and like a summer's cloud.

John M. Miles, M.D.—He was born in Temple, N. H. His father was a minister in Temple for several years, where he died. He married a daughter of Josiah Taylor, of Temple. He was educated at a medical college. He practiced in Boxboro' and Littleton and settled in Acton in 1843, and practiced here until his death, March 22, 1865, aged sixty-three years and five months.

Isaiah Hutchins, M.D.—He was born in Westford, Middlesex County, Mass., September 23, 1829; lived on his father's farm in Groton till eighteen years of age. His education was in the public schools and Lawrence Academy at Groton. He entered the office of Dr. Walter Burnham, of Lowell, as a student in the study of medicine, and graduated from the Worcester Medical College in 1852, and the same year began the practice of medicine at West Acton, and for most of the time since has continued in it at the same place.

He was in the Union army during the nine months' campaign, acting assistant surgeon most of the time in the same regiment, Sixth Massachusetts, during 100 days' campaign as second lieutenant Company E. He married a daughter of Alden Fuller, West Acton.

Charles Barton Sanders, M.D., born in Lowell, Mass., February 19, 1844. He received his early education in the common school at Berwick, Me., and at Berwick Academy, South Berwick, Me. Enlisted as private August 11, 1862, in Rollingsford, N. H., and served with the Thirteenth New Hampshire Volunteers (being promoted to corporal) until March 1, 1864, when he was discharged by orders of the War Department to receive commission as first lieutenant in the United States colored troops, and was assigned to the Thirtieth Regiment; was through the Wilderness campaign and was taken prisoner July 30, 1864, at the battle of "Crater," front of Petersburg, and was confined in a rebel prison at Columbia, S. C., seven months. Mustered out of service December 10, 1865, having served as adjutant of regiment from 1st of June, 1865. Received medical education at Harvard and Bowdoin June 1, 1869. His early years of practice were in Lowell. In July, 1875, he located at Acton Centre. September 4, 1878, he married Elizabeth Taylor, daughter of Moses Taylor, Esq.

LAWYERS.—*Samuel Jones, Esq.*, resided here as an attorney in 1805–06, but left the town and died in the South.

Ferdinand Adolphus Wyman, Esq.—He was born in Waltham, Mass., December 28, 1850. He is a practicing lawyer, resident in Hyde Park, which place he represents for the second term in the Massachusetts Legislature. He was educated in the schools of West Acton. He was assignee of T. Shaw & Brothers, the extensive leather manufacturers, and as assignee or trustee has settled other large estates. He was admitted to the Suffolk bar in 1886. He is a member of the House Committee on Railroads.

A. A. Wyman, Esq.—Mr. Wyman's full name is Alphonso Adelbert Wyman; he was born in West Acton January 29, 1862. He was educated in the common schools of Acton and Lawrence Academy, Groton; he entered Phillips Exeter Academy, 1875; graduated at the head of his class of thirty in 1879. He was president of the Golden Brand, a literary society founded in 1817. He was managing editor of the *Exonian*, a school paper, and he was class historian by unanimous choice of his class. In 1879 he entered Harvard College, from which he graduated with honors in 1883. He was one of twenty-five in a class of 200 elected to the Phi Beta Kappa, holding the highest rank in scholarship. In December, 1883, he began the study of law in the office of Henry W. Paine and William Varen Vaughan, 20 Washington Street, Boston, and was admitted to the Suffolk bar in June, 1885, since which time he has been engaged in the practice of his profession in Boston and West Acton. On July 28, 1886, he was married to Laura Aldrich, and his residence has been in West Acton.

Francis C. Nash, Esq., a native of Maine, graduated at Tufts College, 1863; admitted to practice in Maine in 1866, and was in active practice in the Maine courts for several years. He opened an office in Boston (54 Devonshire Street) in 1880, residing at West Acton, at the homestead of Mr. John Hapgood, whose daughter Clara he married. He has been on Board of School Committee as chairman and superintendent of schools in Acton, and held other positions of trust.

Mrs. Clara Hapgood Nash, daughter of John and Clara Hapgood, was admitted to practice before the Supreme Judicial Court of Maine, October, 187[illegible]. She was the first lady admitted to the practice of the court, in which she was for several years in co-partnership with her husband. She was, before her law practice, a teacher in public schools, was for a time an assistant principal of the Danvers High School.

Charles B. Stone, Esq.—He was admitted to the Suffolk bar February, 1890.

FROM SHATTUCK'S HISTORY OF CONCORD.—A post-office was established in 1828, and Silas Jones, Esq., was postmaster.

Appropriations:

Object	1750.	1760.	1770.	1780.	1790.	1800.	1810.	1820.
Minister	£50	£52	£70	£3562	80	353	353	630
Schools	13	12	24	2000	49	333	450	450
Roads	26	70	60	800	120	400	500	600
Incidental	20	12	80	1000	100	500	10,000	1400

In 1826 the aggregate time of keeping schools was 28 months, attended by 412 pupils, (227 males, 185 females); 139 under 7 years, 160 from 7–14 and 113 from 14 upwards.

In 1825 there were 2 carding-machines, 2 fulling-mills and 4 saw-mills; valuation, $862,928.

Barrels were the staple production of the town, 20,000 estimated as the annual production.

The population in 1764 was 611; in 1790, including Carlisle, 853; in 1800, 901; in 1810, 885; in 1820, 1047; in 1830, 1128.

In 1821 there were 140 dwelling-houses, 230 other buildings, 513 acres of tillage land on which were raised 705 bushels of rye, 932 of oats, 5833 of corn, 75 of barley, 140 of beans; 1527 acres of mowing land, producing 956 tons of hay; 2026 acres of pasturing, keeping 939 cows, 196 oxen; 2055 acres of wood, 3633 acres of unimproved, and 1311 unimprovable; 240 used as roads and 500 covered with water. It then had 3 grist-mills.

MISCELLANIES.—The dark day, so called, was May 19, 1780. Joseph Chaffin died in 1836, eighty-four years of age. Solomon Smith, the father of Luke, died July 25, 1837, aged eighty-four. One hundred and thirty-two dwelling-houses in South Acton in a range of a mile from the centre of the village; 109 in West Acton; 60 in the centre. Seventy thousand barrels of apples are shipped from West Acton per year. Between eight and nine thousand barrels are raised within a mile of Acton Centre and of the choicest quality and variety.

QUARRY WORKS IN NORTH ACTON.—This enterprise has opened under the management of David C. Harris and John Sullivan, with encouraging prospects. They already do an extensive business, sending their granite as far west as Nebraska, and as far south as Pennsylvania. The granite has a peculiar merit in its tint, fineness of grain and durability, and gives a growing satisfaction to those who have tried it.

It most resembles what is known as the Concord, N. H., granite, though in some respects it is thought to be superior to that.

The granite has been known for quite a number of years.

A part of the monument at Lexington came from this quarry, and was drawn by oxen.

THE GREAT BLOW—It came Sept. 23, 1815. From "Our First Century," by R. M. Devens, in the article relating to the gale, is the following statement:

"In the little town of Acton the damage amounted to forty thousand dollars.

"This gale was severe at the Centre, blowing down several of the horse sheds around the meeting-house. It came from east and went to the west. It was especially severe among the forests on Myers hill opposite the residence of Charles Robbins, in the east part of the town. It is remembered by several now living, and they have never forgotten the scene of falling forests."

The area of Acton is 12,795 acres. Its valuation in 1886, $1,286,089. Its population by the last State Census in 1885 was 1785; dwelling-houses, 413. The number of children between the ages of 5 and 15 in 1889 was 267. In 1885 there were 190 farms, the product of which was $209,533. The product of the dairies, $77,065. Hay, straw and fodder, $50,132. Vegetables, $19,417; 29,756 fruit trees, 1467 neat cattle, 240 horses. Aggregate of goods in 1885, $332,345. Valuation in 1888, $1,310,947. School property, $22,600. Two thousand volumes in the West Acton libraries; 4000 volumes in William A. Wilde's Memorial Library. The general healthfulness of the climate is well established by the records of the past. Fatal epidemics have been rare. Seldom have the years been marked with prevailing sickness.

The average longevity for the last 26 years including those dying in infancy, has been 44 years and 6 months. This may be taken as an approximate average for the entire history of the town. Longevity has always been a feature of the locality.

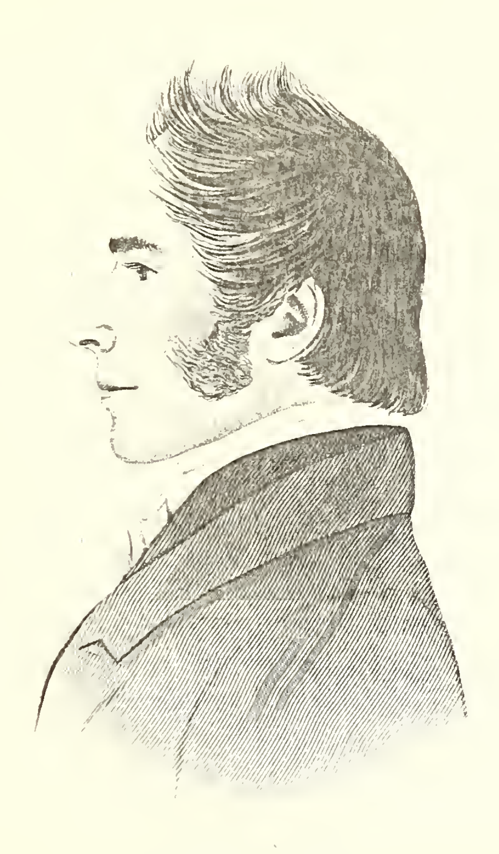
During these 26 years the average number of deaths in town has been 30; the total, 789. Those reaching 60 years, 289; those reaching 70 years, 211; those reaching 80 years, 98; those reaching 90 years, 14. The highest age reported is that of Mrs. Mehitable Piper, 101 years and 2 months, March 25, 1872. She was the wife of Silas Piper.

From Shattuck's "History" we learn that during the twenty years subsequent to 1800 there were published 208 intentions of marriages, and there occurred 161 marriages, 344 births, 302 deaths, of whom 72 died under one year old, 32 were 80 and upwards, 8 were 90 and upwards and one lived 99½. The average number annually was 15, about one in 70 of the whole population. The mean average age was 35.

LONGEVITY.—The causes explaining this longevity are not obscure. They may be found in the frugal habits of the people; in the tonic air of the hills; in the pure water of the springs; in the excellent drainage of the low lands, by means of running brooks and larger streams; in the variety of the soil, fertile enough to encourage a diligent culture; in the landscapes ever present and ever shifting to accommodate the moods of the resting or laborious hours; in the vicinage of the ocean, near enough to enjoy its cooling baths in the heat of summer, and distant enough to escape the extreme chill of the more vigorous months.

DEATHS OF THE OLDEST PERSONS.

Benjamin Brabrook, April 27, 1744; James Brabrook, died at Nova Scotia, Fort Lawrence, May 8, 1756; Samuel Brabrook, died at Remsford Island, July 14, 1756; Francis Baker, 1815; Isaac Davis, Sr., 1740; John Davis, died in Littleton, Oct. 6, 1753; Ebenezer Davis, died March 5, 1755; John Edwards, died Sept. 25, 1763; Nathaniel Edwards, April 6th, about 1800, 80 years old; Dea. Joseph Fletcher, Sept. 1, 1746; Ammi Faulkner, Aug. 4, 1776, 64 years; Jonathan Hosmer, Jr., Oct. 1, 1777; Ephraim Hapgood and Nathaniel, lost in a vessel at sea coming home from Maine, Nov. 1, 1780; Samuel Jones, Nov. 29, 1796; Phineas Osgood, on Daniel Tuttle place, Dec. 27, 1752; Samuel Prescott, July 25, 1758; George Robbins, July 24, 1747; Nathan Robbins, June 7, 1764; Thomas Smith, May 10, 1778; David Stinson, Sept. 25, 1746; Daniel Shepherd, Sept. 15, 1785; William Thomas, Sept. 26, 1796; Joseph Wheeler, June 27, 1776; Ensign Mark White, Oct. 5, 1758; Abraham Wood, Feb. 26, 1759; Jacob Wood, March 7, 1759; Hezekiah Wheeler, May 5, 1759, supposed to be grandfather to Josiah D. Wheeler; Joseph Woolley, June 24, 1787; 1823, James Billings, on Perkins' place, 74 years; 1824, John White, 54; David Forbush, May 19, 1803, 85; Titus Law, Feb. 16, 1801, 84; Dorothy Robbins, widow of Nathan, July 9, 1802, 93; Joseph Piper, Dec. 19, 1802, 85; Sarah, widow of Samuel Jones, Dec. 29, 1802, 86; Simeon Hayward, June 5, 1803, 48; Lieut. John Adams, Oct. 30, 1803, 87; Stephen Law, Nov. 7, 1784, 77; Francis Faulkner, Esq., 77, Aug. 5, 1805; Widow Sarah Cutting, Dec. 25, 1805, 97; Lucy Hunt, wife of Dea. Simon, March 31, 1808, 71, ; Esther Piper, widow of Joseph Piper, April 27, 1810, 85; Catharine Davis, widow of Simon, Jan. 3, 1810, 81; Dr. Abraham Skinner, April 17, 1810, 54; ✓Lieutenant John Heald, Oct., 1810, 90; Thomas Wheeler, Nov. 17, 1810, 85; Ephraim Hosmer, Nov. 17, 1811, 89; Rebecca Faulkner, widow of Francis, Esq., 76, April 3, 1812; Deacon Joseph Brabrook, April 28, 1812, 75; 1813, Philip Robbins, Feb. 6, 73; 1813 Samuel Wright, March 2, 87; 1813, Captain Joseph Brown, Aug. 9, 61; 1813, Roger Wheeler, Dec. 30, 77; 1814, Lieut. Simon Tuttle, April 21, 80; 1814, Lieut. Henry Durant, May 6, 40; 1814, Capt. Zedekiah Smith, in the Army, May 16, 45; 1814, Silas Brooks, Aug. 11, 68; 1814, John Harris, Nov. 26, 80; 1815, David Davis, Sept. 16, 72; 1816, John Hunt, April 4, 78; 1816, John Shepherd, May 27, 64; 1800, Capt. Joseph Robbins, March 31; 1816, Capt. Daniel Davis, Dec. 7, 67; 1817, Samuel Wheeler, April 5, 82; 1817, Capt. Stevens Hayward, Oct. 6, 56; 1817, John Handley, Dec. 12, 81; 1819, Benjamin Wild, in Boston, Aug. 2, 56; 1819, Thomas Law, March 20, 78; 1819, Abraham Hapgood, April 6, 66; 1820, Ezekiel Davis, Feb., 68; 1820, Dea. Simon Hunt, April 28, 86; 1820, Oliver Jones, Aug. 11, 82; 1820, Daniel Brooks, Aug. 25, 82; 1821, Joseph Barker, April 12, 99; 1821, Nathaniel Faulkner, July 2, 85; 1821, John Robbins, Dec. 31st, 60; 1821, Dea. John Wheeler, 56; 1822, Josiah Bright, 63; 1822, Jonathan Hosmer, July 10, 87; 1822, Smith Foster, 67; James Marsh, 71; 1822, Lieut. Thomas Noyes, Nov. 19, 82; 1821, Joseph Brooks, 74; 1824, David Barnard, 64; 1824, Samuel Hayward, 82; 1824, Jonathan Billings, died in Concord, 85; 1824, John Wheeler, 64; 1825, Stephen Chaffin, 65; 1825, Jonas Brooks, 78; 1825, Joel Willis, 44; 1826, Samuel Temple, 74; 1827, Benjamin Brabrook, 85; 1827, Israel Robbins, 82, 1827, Samuel Parlin, 80; 1827, Quartis the colored man, 61; 1827, William Reed, 85; 1828, Ephraim Forbush, 72; 1828, Nathan Wheeler, 57; 1828, Robert Chaffin, 76; 1829, Nathan Brooks, 56; 1829, John Lamson, 89; 1829, John Hunt, 61; 1829, Theodore Wheeler, 52; 1830, Joel Hosmer, 60; 1830, Reuben Davis, 76; 1831, Seth Brooks, 91; 1831, Calvin Houghton, 78; 1831, Joseph Barker, 87; 1831, John Reed, 73; 1831, James Fletcher, 43; 1832, Elias Chaffin, 77; 1832, Jonathan Davis, 80; 1832, Elijah Davis, 82; 1832, John Hayward, 69; 1833, Thomas F. Lawrence, 52; 1833, Daniel Holden, 60; 1833, Abel Conant, 87; 1831, William Cutting, 80; 1834, Ephraim Billings, 83; 1834, Aaron Hayward, 48; 1834, John Faulkner, 73; 1835, Capt. Seth Brooks, 91; 1835, Moses Fletcher, 50; 1835, Lemuel Dole, 54; 1836, John D. Robbins, 58; 1836, Jonathan Fletcher, 64; 1836, Aaron Jones, 82; 1836, Joseph Chaffin, 84; 1836, John Robbins, Esq., 74; 1836, Daniel Taylor, 65; 1836, Luther Wright; 1837, Moses Woods, 87; 1837, Solomon Smith, 84; 1837, Amos Noyes, 72; 1838, Deacon Phineas Wheeler, 65; 1838, Ebenezer Barker, 73; 1838, Silas Piper; 1838, Benjamin Hayward; 1839, Nathaniel Faulkner, 73; 1839, David Barnard, 45; 1839, Peter Fletcher; 1839, Jonathan Powers; 1840, Capt. John Handley, 54; 1840, Simon Hosmer; 1840, Daniel F. Barker; 1840, John Oliver; 1841, Jonathan Billings, the clock maker, 64; 1841, Reuben Wheeler; 1841, Joseph B. Chamberlain; 1841, Daniel White; 1841, Ephraim Brooks; 1841, Peter Haynes; 1841, Hannah Leighton, 92; 1842, Jonas Wood; 1842, Abel Proctor, 87; 1842, John Wheeler; 1843, Paul Conant; 1844, Luther Robbins, 41; 1844, Samuel Handley; 1844, William Stearns; 1845, Moses Faulkner; 1846, Ammi F. Adams, 79; 1846, Charles Handley, 87; 1846, William Reed, 68; 1847, Danforth Law, 44; 1847, Amos Handley, 75; 1847, John Chaffin, 68; 1848, Samuel Hosmer, 86, Revolutionary soldier; 1828, Amos Law, 51; 1848, John S. Fletcher, 67; 1848, Ebenezer Robbins, 60; 1848, Jonathan Wheeler, 61; 1849, Ephraim Hapgood, 67; 1849, Allen Richardson, 63; 1849, Nathaniel Stearns, 61; 1849, Joseph Barker, 74; 1849, Thomas Thorp, 94; 1850, Joseph Brown, 44; 1851, Nathaniel G. Brown, 70; 1851, Nathan Wright, 60; 1851, Ebenezer Davis, 74; 1852, Tilly Robbins, 79; 1852, Silas Holden, 58; 1853, Daniel Wetherbee, father of Phineas, 66; 1853, Daniel Barker, 79; 1854, Nathan D. Hosmer, 83; 1854, Joseph Harris, father of Daniel, 85; 1854, Henry Woods, 79; 1855, Ebenezer Barker, 53; 1855, Jonathan Barker, 78; 1855, Asa Parker, 63; 1855, Luther B. Jones, 67; 1856, Dr. Charles Tuttle, 87; 1856, Abijah Oliver, 86; 1856, Ebenezer Smith, 81; 1856, John Handley, father of David M., 93; 1856, Solomon Smith, 61; 1858, Reuben Barker, 72; 1859, Paltiah Brooks, 77; 1859, Eli Faulkner, 79; 1859, Silas Piper, 67; 1860, Francis Piper, son of Josiah, 80; 1860, Dea. John White, 75; 1861, Silas Jones, 74; 1861, Edward Wetherbee, 79; 1861, Jedidiah Tuttle, 67; 1861, Abraham Conant, 77; 1862, Cyrus Wheeler, 59; 1862, Joel Oliver, 84; 1863, John Harris, 88; 1863, Joseph Brabrook, 83; 1863, Reuben Wheeler, Josiah D.'s father, 81; 1863, Joel Conant, 75; 1863, Abel Robbins, 71; 1864, Simon Tuttle, 71; 1864, James Keyes, 89; 1864, William Reed, father of Moses' father, 83; 1865, Dr. John M. Miles, 63; 1865, George W. Robbins, son of Philip, 84; 1865, Charles Robbins, 79; 1866, Luther Conant, 80; 1867, Ivory Keyes, 62; 1868, Hon. Stevens Hayward, 81; 1868, Jonathan B. Davis, 78; 1868, Luther Davis, 81; 1869, Dr. Peter Goodnow, died in Boston, 80; 1870, Cyrus Putnam, 72; 1870, Amos Handley, 70; 1872, Mehitable Barker Piper, 101-2-1, March 25; 1872, Abel Jones, 88; 1872, Dea. Silas Hosmer, 80; 1872, Jonathan Hosmer, 86; 1872, Simeon Knights; 1873, James Harris, 68; 1873, Abel Farrar, 76; 1873, Elnathan Jones, 78; 1863, William Reed, 69; 1874, Silas Taylor, 80; 1874, Nathaniel Hapgood, 89; 1874, George Robbins, 90; 1874, Simon Hapgood, 86; 1875, Alden Fuller, 77; 1875, Dr. Harris Cowdry, 72; 1876, Ithamar Parker 78; 1876, Amos Cutter, 88; 1876, Oliver W. Drew, M.D., 78; 1876, Mrs. Eliza, wife of Elnathan Jones, 79; 1876, Samuel T. Adams, 79; 1876, Mrs. Susan Abel Forbush, 76; 1877, Francis Tuttle, Esq., 86; 1877, Rufus Tenney, 82; 1877, Dennis Putnam, 82; 1878, Mrs. Harriet Tuttle, widow of Francis Tuttle, Esq., 82; 1878, Nathan Chaffin, 77; 1878, Thomas Taylor, 72; 1878, Silas F. Bowker, 83; 1878, Miss Submit Wheeler, 75; 1879, Daniel Jones, 66; 1879, Dea. John Fletcher, 89; 1879, Mrs. Sarah B. Stearns, 85; 1879, Jeremiah Hosmer, son of Amos and Susan, 85; 1879, Mrs. Harriet Davis, 82; 1879, Levi Chamberlain, 72; 1879, Ruth Dole, 96; 1879, Mrs. Myra T. Miles, 74; 1880, Ebenezer Wood, 87; 1880, Jonathan Wheeler, 89; 1880, Peter Tenney, 81; 1880, Col. Winthrop E. Faulkner, 74; 1880, Mrs. Ruth Hager, 91; 1880, Mrs. Lucy Noyes, 66; 1880, Mrs. Betsey Chaffin, 87; 1880, William Davis, 89; 1881, Nathan Brooks, 81; 1881, Mrs. Ruth C., wife of Joseph P. Reed, 73; 1881, Abel Forbush, 84; 1881, Mrs. Betsey H. Adams, 86; 1881, Aaron Fletcher, 80; 1881, Joseph P. Reed, 73; 1881, Jonathan A. Piper, 73; 1881, James W. Wheeler, 69; 1882, Joseph Wheeler, 85; Jonas Blodgett, 71; 1883, Tilly Robbins, 81; Daniel Wetherbee, 68; 1881, Simon Hosmer, 84; 1887, Robert Chaffin; 1888, David M. Handley, 86; Cyrus Barker, 85.



Henry Skinner

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.

HENRY SKINNER.

We are fortunate in being able to secure this memento of the past, in the portrait of Mrs. Skinner's husband. It is an excellent presentation of the man as he appeared in early manhood. He was a genial, cultured gentleman: fond of reading, though not a graduate of college: moving in the choicest circles of society: quiet in his style, but buoyant and active.

He went to Brookfield, when a youth, to act as clerk in a store. The storekeeper told him never to find fault with the butter which the customers brought for barter, but simply, upon examining its quality, to tell them how much he would give them.

His father, Dr. Abraham Skinner, died in 1810, when Henry was obliged to return to Acton, and, in company with his brother, Francis Skinner, for a while had charge of the farm. The homestead and farm were afterwards owned by Charles Tuttle.

Dr. Skinner built the house on this site in 1794, which, in its day, like that of Mrs. Skinner, built about the same time, ranked among the most elegant in town.

The wife of Dr. Abraham Skinner was a Miss Coit, from Marlboro'. He had a large medical practice for years. Dr. Skinner's father was noted as a violinist. He could play on the violin and jump through a window and not break the time or the tune.

Francis Skinner, the brother of Henry, was a noted merchant in Boston, and became quite wealthy in trade, and was generous in his treatment of his brother's widow.

Mrs. Skinner tells this anecdote of her husband, after locating in business in Andover: "A friend of Mr. Skinner, Mr. Kidder, said to him, one day, 'Now, Skinner, you ought to be married; and I wish to make you this proposition: If you will get married within a year, you shall have my house, rent free, for a year; *but* if you don't get married within a year, you shall give me one of your best carpets for my new house.' Upon this," Mrs. Skinner said, "he came right over to Acton and got married. He could not afford to lose the rent of that house a year, any way," said Mrs. Skinner, smilingly.

Mr. Skinner was noted, while a trader in Andover, for his earnest temperance principles. He was in full sympathy with Dr. Edwards, of Andover, who was at that time, stirring the whole community with his appeals for a reform.

Among his papers is this quaint agreement, signed by Mr. Skinner, showing his style of work in this line: —

"*This is to Certify*, That Henry Skinner agrees to give Rogers Blood cloth to make a good coat, providing he does not drink any rum, gin or brandy, wine or any kind of intoxicating spirits, for twelve months from this day (Andover, July 20, 1828), and Blood is to forfeit ten dollars if he does not abide by this agreement. Signed in presence of John Berby, who promises to make the cloth into a coat for Mr. Blood if he obtained it in the aforesaid way."

The autograph appended to the portrait of Mr. Skinner, here presented, was cut from this agreement.

Mr. Skinner dying before the fulfilment of this obligation, there is this additional statement: —

ANDOVER, April 10, 1830.

Received of Josiah H. Adams, administrator, six dollars, in full the within obligation, by me.

ROGERS BLOOD.

Mr. Skinner was active in exertions to repress the liquor traffic in Andover, urging the rumseller to stop, and in some cases securing pledges to that effect. His early death was a great public calamity as well as a private grief.

JOSEPH BRABROOK.

He was the father of George, Alfred, Sarah, and Benjamin. His fine engraving, presented to the public in this history of Acton, is that

of a man who had some notable features of character worthy of special remembrance. He was an honest man. So all the records prove: so all the reminiscences of the man reported by his most familiar contemporaries affirm. He was honest in large trusts; his honesty went down also into the minutiæ of life equally sure. If he had made the mistake of a cent in trade with the storekeeper anywhere in town, his first steps were directed back to the man with whom the mistake had been made, and his conscience was uneasy till full satisfaction had been given. The witnesses who rise up in judgment on the man all agree. Says one: "If there ever was an honest man in the town of Acton, Joseph Brabrook was that man."

His integrity was impressed upon the memories of his fellow-townsmen as vividly as the clear outlines of the beautiful eminence on which has stood for nearly a century and half the Brabrook homestead. Thanks to his son George, we have a permanent reminder of all the good qualities of his father and family and ancestry associated with that structure in the life-like engraving of the artist. It is a fitting tribute of a loyal son to a worthy father. The noble elm to the left in the landscape is of the same age with Alfred, another son. This cluster of elms around the Brabrook house, like the other notable elms in town, are typical illustrations of the nobility of the men who planted them and lived and died under their shade.

The house itself, though built in 1751, was put together from cellar to ridgepole with Brabrook thoroughness, and it stands to-day unrocked by the roughest winds that sweep over the heights.

Mr. Brabrook was a cooper, and made barrels in the winter, and the Brabrook stamp was enough to carry them forthwith into and out of the market. He raised hogs, and there were no cleaner or better hogs in town. He did not let them revel in their trough after dinner, but invented an arrangement for lifting it at once out of their reach till the next meal was ready. He raised peaches, and they were of the best quality, and had the real Brabrook flavor. The canker worms at one time made their raid upon his peach orchard. He met them at their first outset, and said, "Those worms are not to eat my peach orchard," and off went the branches. A new and better growth soon repaid for the trimming.

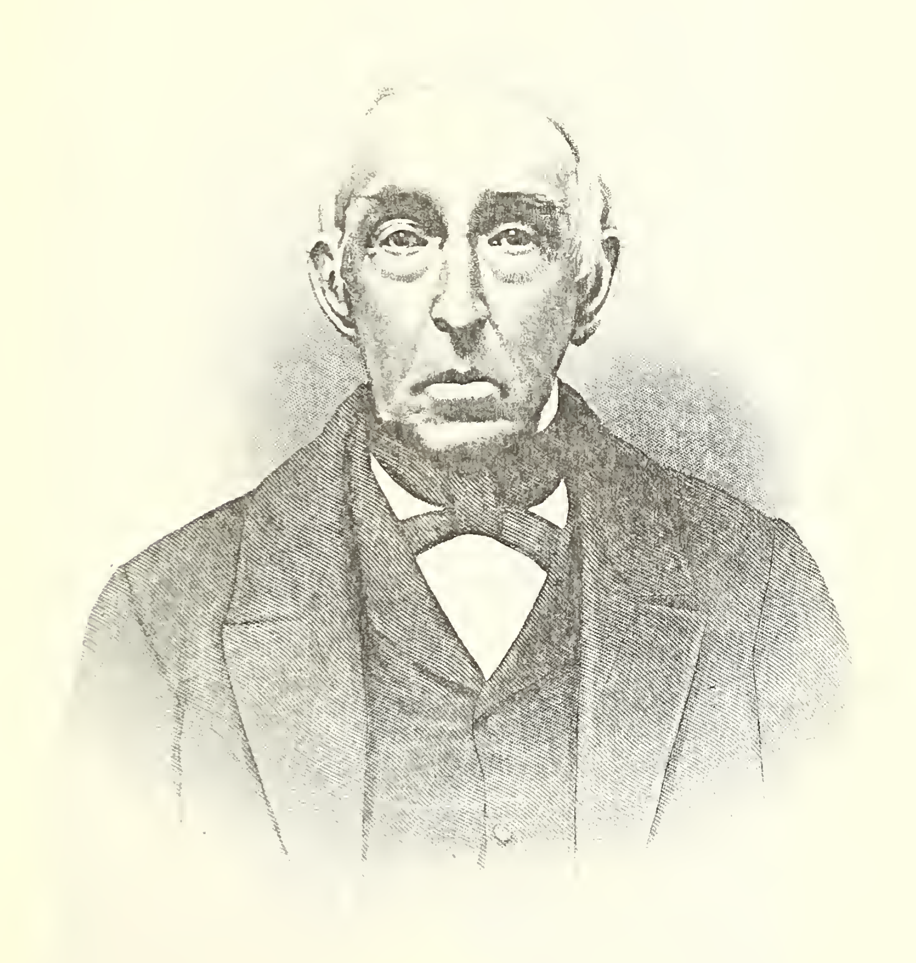
He was a man of moderate size; not large, nor tall, not demonstrative, not loud spoken on the streets or elsewhere, but efficient in bringing about sure results. He lost no time at the loitering places of the village. If he took his oxen to the blacksmith's to be shod, and Blodgett said, "Please wait a few minutes, and I will attend to your case shortly, Mr. Brabrook," he at once started them on their homeward beat, saying, "I will come again," and he would do it, a second and a third time if necessary. He was a peaceable, careful, reverent man. He kept up his habit of asking a blessing at the table in his latest life, even when his voice could scarcely be heard by him who sat nearest at the table. Silas Conant, Sr., heard one of his last utterances. It was this: "O God, we thank thee for this food that is set before us; we thank thee kindly for Christ's sake."

He was devoted to his family. He had an efficient, worthy companion in his wife, whose energy and wisdom aided him essentially in accomplishing the grand issue of his life-work.

His quiet, faithful ministries in her last painful and prolonged sufferings are remembered, and have endeared his name to a large circle of appreciating neighbors. His children rise up at the remembrance of his life on the Hill, and call him blessed. He died February 15, 1863, aged eighty-three years and six months. His wife, Sally, died December 17, 1847, aged sixty-five years and six months.

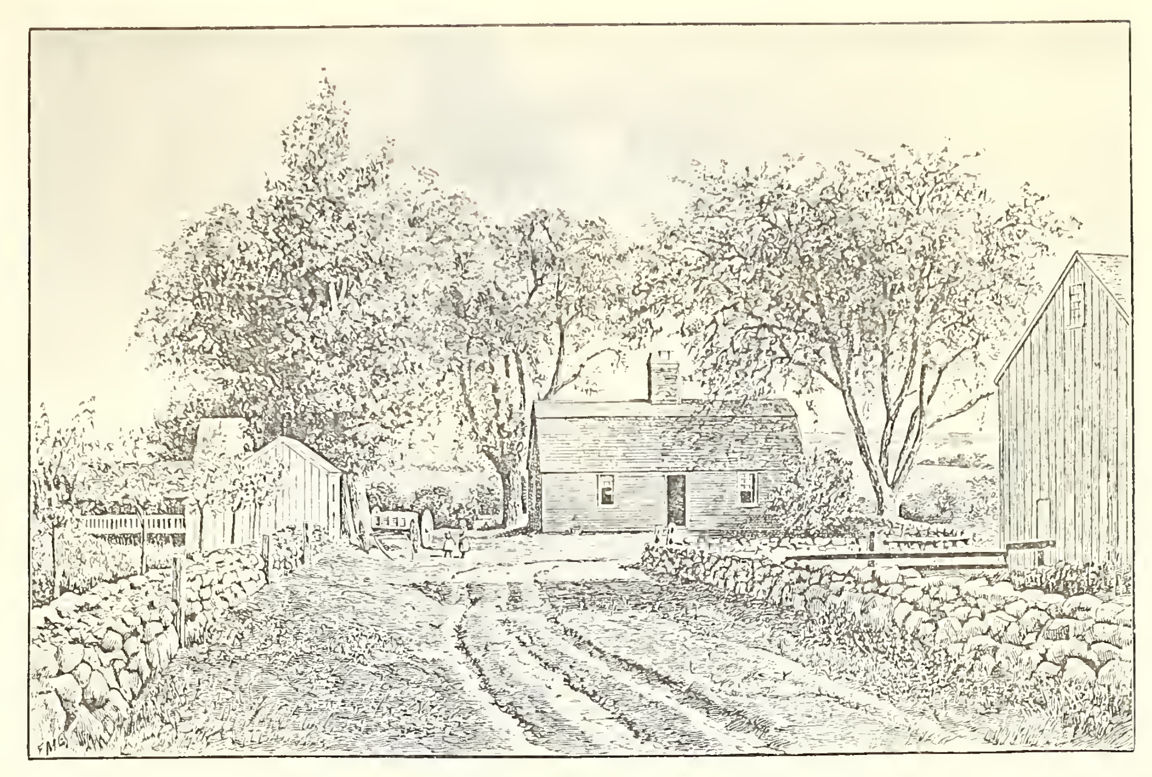
Two Brabrook brothers were here as early as 1669.

Thomas married Abigail Temple, daughter

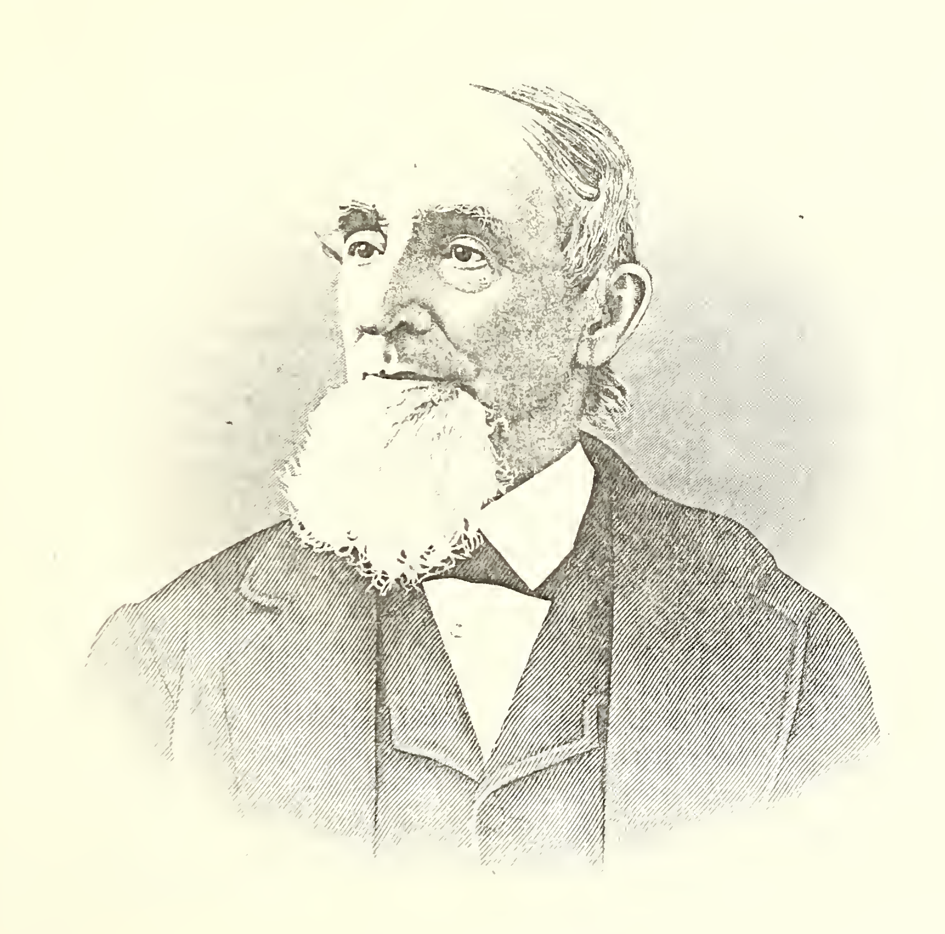


Joseph Brabrook





THE BRABROOK HOMESTEAD. 1751.



Bradley Stone

of Richard Temple, in 1669, and died in 1692. Joseph, from whom those bearing the name descended, married Sarah Graves, in 1672, and had one, Joseph, who married Sarah Temple, and died in 1719. He was father to Benjamin and grandfather to Deacon Joseph.

Second, John, who died a soldier at Lancaster, in 1705. Several daughters.

James, died at Fort Lawrence, in Nova Scotia, in 1756.

Benjamin Brabrook, the father of Deacon Joseph Brabrook, was second lieutenant of Company 5, Third Regiment of Militia, March 7, 1780. John Heald, first lieutenant; Simon Hunt, captain. He died January 14, 1827, aged eighty-five.

Joseph Brabrook was chosen deacon September 29, 1775, and died April 28, 1812, aged seventy-three, holding the office thirty-seven years. Anna Brabrook, widow of Deacon Joseph, died March 2, 1816, aged seventy-five.

Joseph Brabrook, the son of Benjamin and Dorcas, was born March 24, 1738. Benjamin, son of Benjamin, was born July 12, 1741. Benjamin Brabrook, son of Benjamin, was married June 6, 1773.

Joseph Adams Brabrook, son of Joseph, Jr., and Sally, was born November 18, 1806. Benjamin F. Brabrook, son of Joseph, Jr., and Sally, was born September 15, 1809. Sarah Appleton Brabrook, daughter of Joseph and Sally, born November 29, 1826. George, son of Joseph and Sally, born November 9, 1828. Alfred.

Benjamin was a Baptist minister, and preached with efficiency, but died young.

BRADLEY STONE.

He was born Sept. 4, 1801, in Chesterfield, N. H. His father's name was Joel, and his grandfather's Peter. He came to West Acton when a young man, and established himself as a blacksmith, and soon exhibited an originality and versatility of talent which inspired great hopes of his future success.

Sept. 29, 1828, he married Clarissa Hosmer, daughter of Nathan and sister of Mrs. John Hapgood, recently deceased. She was born March 11, 1804. She has been a bold, patient, cheerful helper and companion all his days. She lived with him uncomplainingly in the little schoolhouse at the cross-roads till he built the brick house on the corner, where they lived ten years. She was efficient in housekeeping, cooking at one time for thirty men when the railroad was in process of construction. She looked after the sick of the village during the long period of its growth, still caring for the same after her strength failed.

They have journeyed happily together for more than sixty years, and are now stepping down the declivities with sprightliness, hand in hand, ready for the Master's call. They must be the oldest couple in town, the husband in the eighty-ninth and the wife in the eighty-sixth year.

The names of their children are here given: George Henry, born in Concord, June 1, 1829, died June 24, 1856; Mary Ann H., born in Acton, May 2, 1831; Edwin, born Dec. 31, 1834, died April 27, 1886; Nathan Hosmer, born Oct. 4, 1838, died March 1, 1874; Clara E. Stone, born Aug. 27, 1842; Charles Bradley Stone, born July 17, 1848.

From the very construction of his mind he has been an enthusiast in every line of work or improvement which he has undertaken. He has watched with zest signs of progress in the village of his adoption. He built the first store, and when the merchandise came too tardily from the metropolis, he projected the Fitchburg Railroad. His genius and pluck, combined in sharp rivalship with that of Colonel Faulkner at the South, insured the success of the enterprise.

His first thought was a new route and road-bed to the city, but this finally yielded to a railroad charter from the Legislature, which was carried by the combined forces of the projectors. Then the question was — which village shall have the depot? This

was at first decided in favor of the South, then the decision reversed in favor of the West, then the compromise by which both secured the advantage. The West was, however, for quite a period, the distributing centre for the country beyond in all directions, far and near.

The fire still kindles with its old lustre in the eye of Mr. Stone as he tells the story of this railroad contest, in which he was so conspicuous a figure.

He has been, from the beginning, a warm advocate of the temperance cause, of the schools, and of the government. His first vote, Democratic, was cast for General Jackson as President, but during the Fugitive Slave Bill excitement he became a Republican, on which side he has voted most of his public life. He watches with an old man's eagerness the recent developments of growth in his vicinity, and is sure of a future for the village and the town as a whole which will rival all the past.

GEORGE CLEAVELAND WRIGHT.

He was born Jan. 7, 1823, in Bedford, Mass. His father, Joel Wright, lived in Boxboro'. His mother, Dolly H. Reed, was born in Littleton, Mass., and afterwards taught school in Boxboro'. George lived in Boxboro' from the age of fifteen to nineteen years, when he learned the shoemaker's trade, at which he worked for nine years, the first two years in employ of Deacon John Fletcher, of Acton, and the rest of the time in business for himself at West Acton.

December 31, 1846, he married Susan H. Davis, daughter of Jonathan B. Davis, granddaughter of Simon Hosmer and grandniece of Captain Isaac Davis, who was killed at Concord fight.

Four of their children lived to grow up, born as follows: Estella M. Wright, December 20, 1849; George S. Wright, July 13, 1857; Effie R. Wright, June 13, 1860; T. Bertha Wright, June 5, 1866.

At the age of thirty-one, after being in the milk business in Charlestown and Boston two years, he engaged in the coffee and spice business as a member of the firm of Hayward & Co., which, after twenty-five years of successful business, united with Dwinell & Co., and soon afterwards with Mason & Co., making the firm of Dwinell, Hayward & Co., the largest coffee and spice house in New England. Though always an equal partner in every respect, he has never asked to have his name attached to the firm-name.

For the past thirty years he has been the coffee buyer of the firm, and his frequent trips to the New York markets have made him personally known to most of the prominent coffee men of this country.

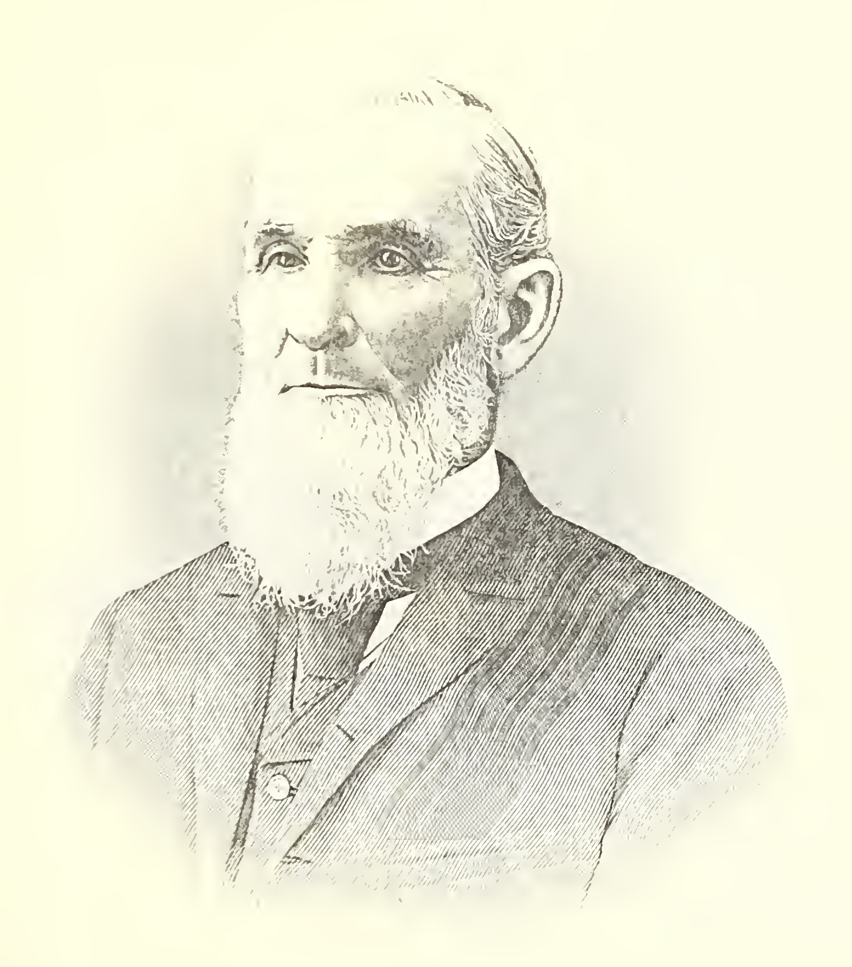
As a coffee buyer he has few equals and no superiors. With the courage of his convictions, backed by a most thorough knowledge of the statistical position of the article in question, he has shown his right to the foremost position in his department of the business; notably so in the rise of 1886–87, when the Brazilian coffees advanced in one year more than 250 per cent. in value.

From small beginnings the firm of Dwinell, Hayward & Co. has seen a healthy and legitimate growth, and to-day distributes the products of its extensive factory, located at the corner of Batterymarch and Hamilton Streets, Boston, in almost every State and Territory this side the Rocky Mountains.

Mr. Wright is strictly a self-made man. Without rich or influential friends to help, he has won for himself a position in the business world that any man might envy and few attain, and he bids fair, at the age of sixty-seven, to enjoy for many years the competency that he so well deserves.

Early in his successful career, 1861, he secured for himself a worthy home on the brow of the hill overlooking the village of West Acton, and which commands a glorious view of the surrounding country. Here his children grew up, and here he still resides.

He has been prominently identified with



Geo. C. Wright





Moses Taylor



the Universalist Parish in West Acton, and was one of three to contribute a large sum toward the erection of its present meeting-house.

In all the village and town improvements. Mr. Wright has always shown a lively interest and a generous help.

Lyceum and temperance, school and library, have found in him a firm friend and a most liberal patron.

In the Legislature of 1874, he represented the towns of Acton, Wayland, and Sudbury as a Republican, with credit to himself and with satisfaction to his constituents.

Though a Republican in politics, Mr. Wright has never hesitated to work and vote for *principles*, not party — for men, not *machines*.

MOSES TAYLOR.

He was born in Acton, April 16, 1822. He was the son of Silas Taylor and Sophia Hapgood, who were married April 11, 1820. She was the daughter of Ephraim and Molly Hapgood, and was born February 13, 1792, and died March 10, 1869. Silas Taylor came from Boxboro' to Acton, and bought of Moses Richardson the estate situated where Moses Taylor now lives. The house then standing was unpainted, with a roof running down in the rear. There was a well-sweep and an oaken bucket in front. The chimney was made of flat stone, laid in clay and twelve feet square. It stood on that site for over a hundred years. The new house was built by Mr. Silas Taylor. The old site was known as the Barker place, Joseph Barker (2), originally.

Mr. Silas Taylor, the father of Moses, was a man of rare sense and wit, of great physical power and endurance, a laborious and saving man, and accumulated for those times great possessions. He was a soldier of the war of 1812, and served at Sackett's Harbor on Lake Erie, receiving a pension for the same in his later life. He was kind to the poor, and in his quiet way befriended many in embarrassed circumstances. He was favored in the companionship for forty-nine years of a woman of rare modesty, judgment, and grace.

The grandfather of Moses Taylor was Silas Taylor, a resident of Stow, formerly of Watertown. He commanded a company from Stow in the battle of Bennington, Vermont, August 16, 1777, and was present at the capture of Burgoyne. He was for many years a justice of the peace in Stow, and town clerk, and did most of the marrying and other town business.

The sword which he carried at Bennington, as also the sword carried to South Boston, by Captain Silas Jones in 1812 war, have recently been presented to the Memorial Library of Acton, by Moses Taylor.

He was educated in the common schools of Acton, and in addition attended the Academy at Ashby two terms. He had the offer of a liberal education by his father, but chose rather the homestead farm, whose acres he still cultivates to the full measure of his strength and beyond measure.

June 18, 1846, he was married, by Rev. James T. Woodbury, to Mary Elizabeth Stearns, daughter of Nathaniel Stearns, of Acton, formerly of Waltham. She was born in Littleton, November 5, 1825. Her mother was Sophia Hammond, the daughter of Mary Bigelow, of Weston — of the old Bigelow stock.

Mr. Taylor, though a busy, hard-working man upon the farm, has ever taken a deep personal interest in public affairs, having earnest convictions upon all subjects which engaged his attention. In politics he has been a Whig and Republican. In 1882 he was elected by his district of towns, including Acton, Concord, Littleton, Stow and Boxboro', as a Republican, to the Legislature. He has been justice of peace thirty years in succession, beginning in 1840.

He has been an ardent friend of the military, having held commission in the Davis

Guards as fourth, third, second, first lieutenant and captain, which he resigned 1857. Otherwise he would have been in position to command at the outbreak of the Rebellion. He was deputy marshal to enroll soldiers during the Rebellion. He took the United States census of Littleton, Stow, Boxboro', and Acton in 1870.

He built or remodeled the following houses at the Centre. Dr. Sanders', the parsonage, Mrs. Rouillard's, Reuben Reed, Lyman Taylor's, the two new structures at the east of the Common, formerly the Fletcher homestead, where the library now stands.

When the project of building the library was pending in the mind of Mr. Wilde, rather than have the project fail, Mr. Taylor came forward with his thousand dollars and cleared the grounds for the structure. He has been parish collector at times, and on the Parish Committee for over forty years, and a member of the choir, with his wife and children, most of the time. He is the oldest member of the Board of Trustees of the Memorial Library, having been selected by Mr. Wilde as a member for life in the charter of incorporation.

Mr. Silas Taylor, the father of Moses, died January 28, 1874, aged eighty years and seven months. Sophia Taylor, sister of Moses, born March 8, 1821; died August 5, 1839, aged eighteen years, four months and twenty-seven days. Martha Taylor, sister of Moses and wife of Hon. John Fletcher, born March 8, 1829, and died August 14, 1882, aged fifty-three years and five months. Silas Taylor, Jr., brother of Moses, born April 2, 1825, and died March 18, 1844, aged eighteen years and sixteen days.

Children of Moses and Elizabeth: Silas Hammond Taylor, born March 25, 1847, married Mary Thompson, of Oxford, Nova Scotia. Children of Hammond and Mary: Mary Elizabeth Taylor, Moses Taylor, Martha Taylor, Marion Celeste.

Moses Emery Taylor married Clara Tuttle, daughter of Edward Tuttle. Children of Emery and Clara: Carrie Elizabeth, Wilmot Emery, Simon Davis.

Lyman Cutler Taylor married Addie Tuttle, daughter of Capt. Daniel Tuttle. Children of Lyman and Addie: Grace Evelyn, Eula Sophia.

Lizzie Sophia Taylor married Charles B. Sanders, M. D. Children of Lizzie and Dr. Sanders: Ralph Barton, Richard Stearns, Helen Elizabeth.

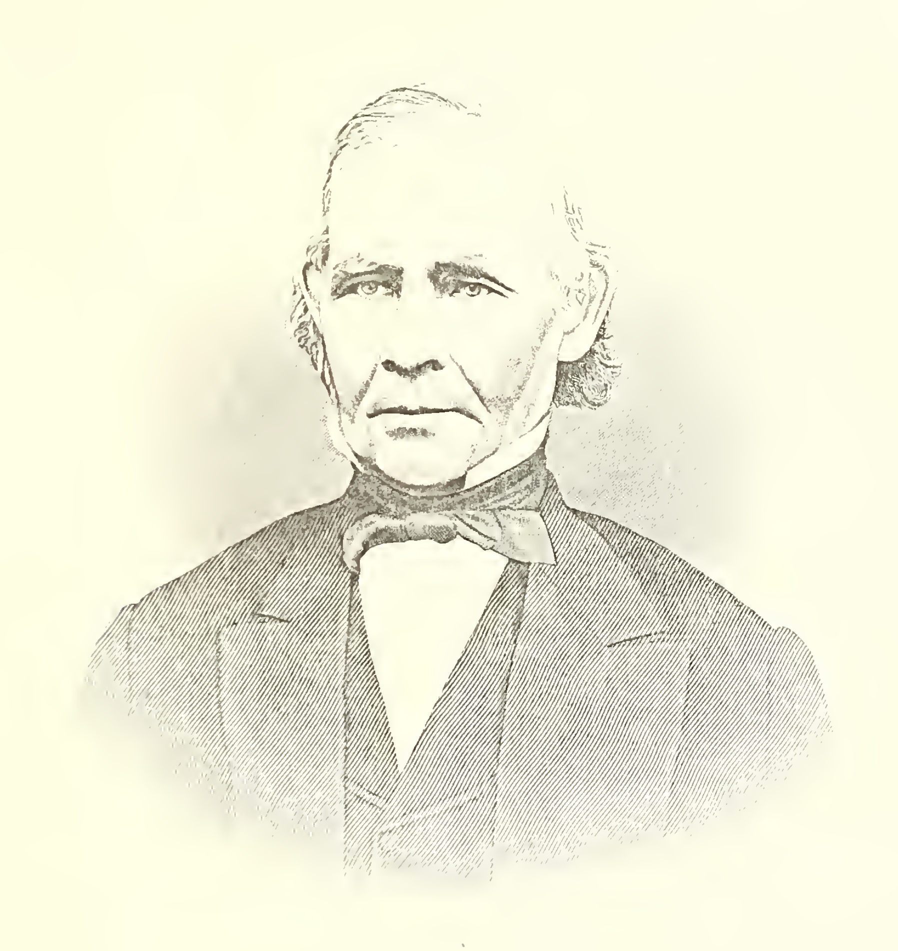
Mary Etta Taylor married Charles Pickens. Children of Mary Etta and Charles Pickens; Carl Pickens, Effie Eloise Pickens. Mrs. Pickens married, after the decease of Mr. Pickens, Edward Wetherbee Conant, son of Winthrop F. Conant.

Simon Davis Taylor, son of Moses and Mary Elizabeth, born November 2, 1855; died. Arthur William Taylor, born November 13, 1863. Charles Carlton, son of Moses and Mary Elizabeth, born October 4, 1868.

SIMON BLANCHARD.

He was born in Boxboro', January 29, 1808. He was the son of Simon, who was the son of Calvin, who was the son of Simon. He married, April 23, 1849, Elizabeth Dix Fletcher, daughter of Jonathan Fletcher. She died July 28, 1874. The children by this marriage are here given: William, born April 3, 1850, died February 15, 1877; Ellen Ann, born September 13, 1851, married January 1, 1873, Calvin M. Holbrook; Elizabeth Fletcher, born October 31, 1856, married Amasa Knowlton; Mr. Blanchard, April 15, 1877, married his second wife, Susan Wheeler, daughter of Abner Wheeler.

Mr. Blanchard lives on one of the choicest landscapes of the northwest corner of the town, towards Littleton, in a comfortable two-story farmhouse. It is in a neighborhood of well-cultured farms and orchards. He has occupied the same site for fifty-one years. His steady, industrious habits have made their impress upon the homestead and all the surroundings. If he has not held com-

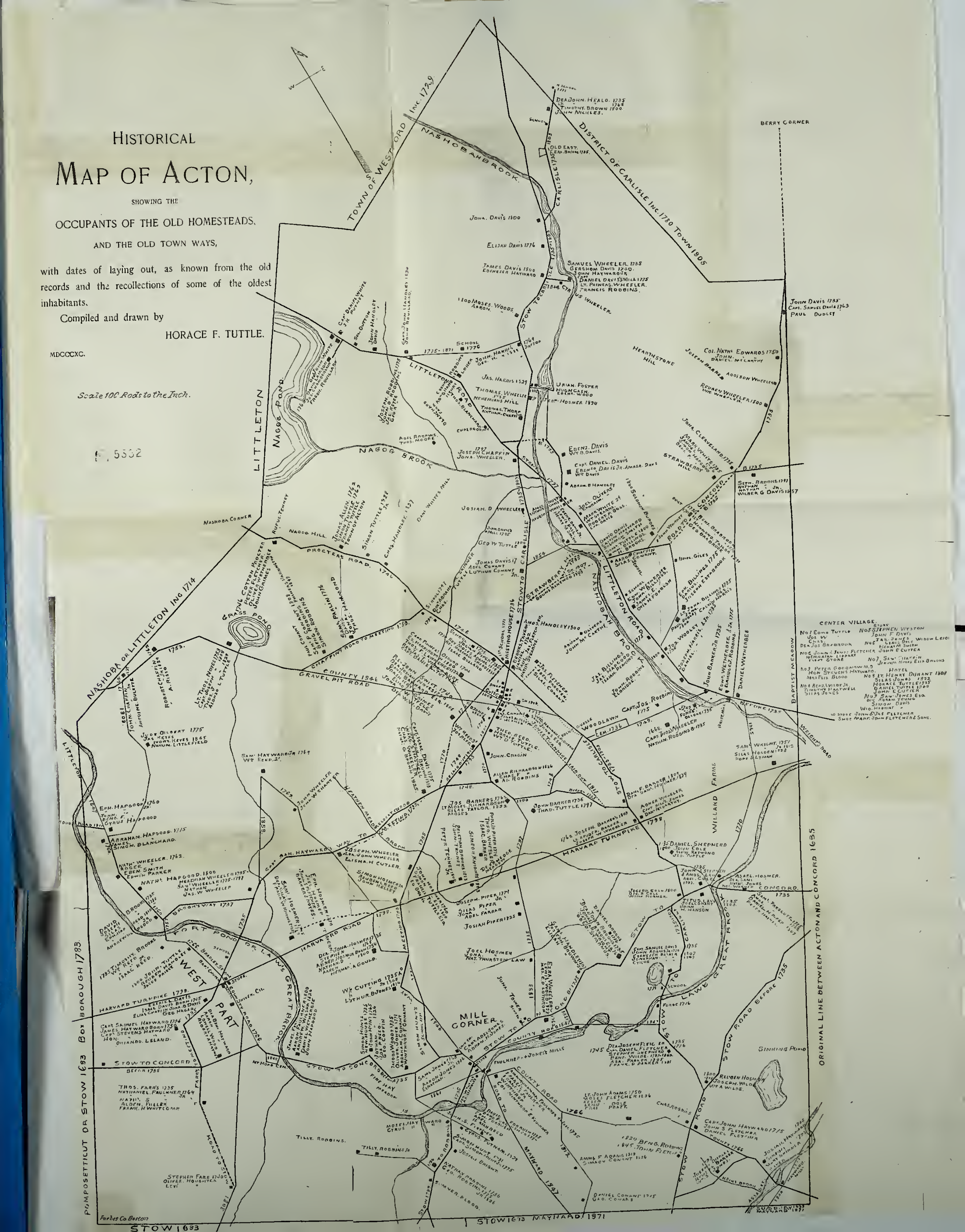


Simon Blanchard



missions and moved in circles of public notoriety and struck the pavements with his dashing steeds, he has maintained his integrity, deserved titles which he might have had for the asking, and reached a venerable age, receiving the confidence and regard of the community, among whom he has lived in peace these many years.

Mr. Blanchard has been a Whig and Republican in politics, a Baptist in his religious faith, and a man of order, sobriety, and good sense in all his public and private relations. His countenance beams with intelligence and good fellowship, and is itself a benediction which we are happy to have where it can be of service to the public.



HISTORICAL
MAP OF ACTON,
SHOWING THE
OCCUPANTS OF THE OLD HOMESTEADS,
AND THE OLD TOWN WAYS,
with dates of laying out, as known from the old records and the recollections of some of the oldest inhabitants.
Compiled and drawn by
HORACE F. TUTTLE.
MDCCCXC.
Scale 100 Rods to the Inch.
TOWN OF WESTFORD INC. 1729
NASHOBAH BROOK
DISTRICT OF CARLISLE INC. 1780 TOWN 1805
BERRY CORNER
LITTLETON
NAGOG POND
NAGOG BROOK
NASHOBA CORNER
NAGOG HILL
PROCTERS ROAD
NASHOBA OR LITTLETON INC 1714
GRASS POND
CHAFFINS ROAD TO MEETING
COUNTY 1846 GRAVEL PIT ROAD
STOW TO CARLISLE
LITTLETON ROAD
NASHOBAH BROOK
HEARTHSTONE HILL
STRAWBERRY HILL
ROAD TO CONCORD
MEETING HOUSE 1736
WOODLAWN
CENTER VILLAGE.
BAPTIST MEADOW
HARVARD TURNPIKE 1798
WILLARD FARMS
FORT POND OR LAWS BROOK
WEST PART
HARVARD ROAD
BROOKS WAY 1737
LAWS GREAT BROOK
MILL CORNER
STOW TO CONCORD
COUNTY ROAD
STOW ROAD BEFORE 1735
SINKING POND
ORIGINAL LINE BETWEEN ACTON AND CONCORD 1635
POMPOSETTICUT OR STOW 1683 BOXBOROUGH 1783
STOW 1683
STOW 1683 MAYNARD 1871
Forbes Co. Boston

